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Chairman: Mr. KITTIKHOUN (Lao People's Democratic Republic)

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AGENDA ITEM 86: COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW OF THE WHOLE QUESTION OF PEACEKEEPING OPERATIONS IN ALL THEIR ASPECTS

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AGENDA ITEM 86: COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW OF THE WHOLE QUESTION OF PEACEKEEPING OPERATIONS IN ALL THEIR ASPECTS (A/51/198-S/1996/270, A/51/130, A/C.4/51/L.9 and L.10)

1. Mr. ANNAN (Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations) said that in recent years conflicts had posed many questions and required everyone to think differently about the ways in which problems of peace and security were addressed. Accomplishments and setbacks had provided important lessons in the international community's current efforts to resolve conflicts in many parts of the world.

2. The first such lesson was that States Members of the United Nations needed to be able to deploy their troops more quickly to a peacekeeping operation and to establish a credible presence before a conflict got completely out of hand. That was a particularly urgent matter in the light of the tragic events in Rwanda, Burundi and Eastern Zaire. Progress was being made in that direction. With the support of the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations, a Mission Planning Service had been established in the Department of Peacekeeping Operations. In addition, with the support of the Government of Italy, a logistics base had been established at Brindisi, where start-up kits for the non-military components of operations had been assembled. The Secretariat was also working with Member States to establish the nucleus of a rapidly deployable mission headquarters. It was also encouraging that a number of Member States, within the context of the United Nations standby arrangements, were developing units which could be deployed immediately following a decision of the Security Council.

3. A second lesson was that the effectiveness of a peacekeeping operation was enhanced when personnel were prepared according to certain common standards. While the training of troops for peacekeeping remained the responsibility of Member States, the Secretariat supported national efforts in a variety of ways. The Department's Training Unit had produced training manuals, guidelines, handbooks and videos, which had been distributed to Member States to assist them in preparing their troops, military observers and civilian police observers to participate in peacekeeping missions. In addition, the United Nations was conducting regional peacekeeping workshops in Africa, Asia, Europe and Latin America. It had also established training assistance teams, which now consisted of experienced peacekeepers from every region of the world. At the request of Governments the teams assisted in the peacekeeping training of national troops and in the development of training programmes for national and regional institutions. Once an operation was deployed, a training programme was conducted for the mission headquarters staff.

4. A third lesson was that, when the parties were genuinely interested in a settlement and expressed their commitment by cooperating with the international community - and ultimately with each other - mountains could be moved in the interest of peace. However, in chaotic conditions in which power had devolved to splinter factions which had no real interest in peace there were limits to

what the international community could accomplish, as demonstrated in the case of Somalia.

5. A fourth lesson was that the international community could sometimes nurture the development of cooperation among the parties and their will for peace when it was able to assist with short-term stability and provide positive inducements for longer-term reconciliation. Inducements could include any variety of activities, including development assistance, local infrastructure and water-supply projects, and the provision of access to loans, as well as medical care and veterinary services. In that connection it was useful to compare the situations in Mozambique and Rwanda. In Mozambique financial assistance had been crucial in enabling the Resistência Nacional Moçambicana (RENAMO) to convert itself from a guerilla army into a legitimate political party. In Rwanda the United Nations Assistance Mission for Rwanda (UNAMIR) had not had the resources to offer similar assistance and consequently had enjoyed little credibility in the eyes of the people or leverage with their leaders.

6. A fifth lesson was that, even though the parties had consented to an operation, the peacekeeping contingents must be deployed with sufficient means to give credibility to their right of self-defence. In order to carry out its mandate and protect itself against attack, a contingent must have the necessary strength and unity of command. In some situations an impressive show of force was the best way of avoiding having to use force. That tactic had been used successfully by the United Nations in the coalition operations in Eastern Slavonia and Bosnia.

7. The final lesson was the need for an in-depth understanding of the conflict based on ample inputs from Member States and solid political analysis. Only on that basis could a clear mandate be formulated, the operational means assembled to achieve it, and public information programmes implemented to explain to the peoples of the world the mission of the United Nations and the limitations of peacekeeping. The key to successful peacekeeping was the parties to the conflict themselves.

8. Mr. ZAKI (Rapporteur), speaking on behalf of the Special Committee for Peacekeeping Operations, introduced the Committee's report to the General Assembly, which reflected recent changes and developments in the peacekeeping landscape. The Special Committee's general debate and its working group discussions had covered a broad range of such issues as the mechanisms for consultation between troop contributors and the Security Council, the financing of peacekeeping operations, the question of rapid deployment and personnel and standby arrangements, cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations, and the safety and security of United Nations personnel.

9. In particular, the Special Committee had concluded that, although there had been a decline in the number of United Nations personnel deployed on peacekeeping missions in the past year, it was still essential for the United Nations to be able to respond to threats to international peace and security; it had observed in that connection that lessons must be learned from recent experiences and efficiency must be enhanced with a view to the settlement of disputes by peaceful means and the prevention of conflicts. The principles and provisions of the Charter of the United Nations must be strictly observed in the

management and conduct of peacekeeping operations, and the operations should be provided with clear mandates and command structures, as well as secure financing.

10. The Committee had noted the development of new arrangements for consultations between troop contributors and the Security Council that had been announced by the President of the Security Council on 28 March 1996, and had encouraged the full utilization of that new procedure.

11. The Committee had encouraged the continuing efforts to improve the Organization's performance in the area of the planning, organization and effectiveness of peacekeeping operations, while calling attention to the imbalance between the number of posts financed by the United Nations and the number of military officers on loan to the Secretariat, and had urged the Secretary-General and the competent bodies of the General Assembly to provide for United Nations financing of posts currently occupied by officers on loan.

12. The Committee had expressed concern about the issue of ensuring the safety and security of United Nations personnel and had called upon Member States to ratify the Convention on the Safety of United Nations and Associated Personnel so as to ensure its entry into force. It had also emphasized the important role of the United Nations in training peacekeeping personnel and had made a number of recommendations, including the further use of training assistance teams to assist Member States in training national instructors and developing peacekeeping training programmes.

13. In addition, the Committee had made several recommendations aimed at enhancing the effectiveness of United Nations civilian police in peacekeeping operations and had called upon the Secretariat to improve the system of standby arrangements for peacekeeping personnel. It had also requested the Secretariat to keep Member States informed with regard to the development and composition of a rapidly deployable headquarters team.

14. The Committee had noted that in the area of finances, further reforms were necessary to ensure that the Department of Peacekeeping Operations had a predictable and stable financial base, and had urged the Secretary-General to ensure that troop-contributing countries were reimbursed in a timely fashion.

15. The Committee had recommended that its membership should be expanded so that those Member States which were past or current personnel contributors to United Nations peacekeeping operations and those which had been observers at the Committee's 1996 session could become members at its 1997 session. The Committee had further recommended that Member States which participated in its work for three consecutive years as observers should become members at its next session.

16. Mr. APUNTE (Ecuador) said that in the view of his delegation, peacekeeping operations were one of the basic areas of activity of the United Nations through which the principle of international cooperation in the maintenance of international peace and security was put into practice. In recent years, Ecuador had provided a contingent for peacekeeping operations in Central America. His delegation supported the criteria set forth in the Special

Committee's report (A/51/130) that peacekeeping operations must be consistent with the principles of sovereignty, territorial integrity and political independence of States, and non-intervention in matters that were within the domestic jurisdiction of any State. At the same time, additional elements which needed to be taken into account in carrying out such operations were the consent of the parties, impartiality, and the non-use of force except in self-defence.

17. on the issue of transparency, Ecuador supported the process of consultations with the Governments of troop-contributing countries. In that connection it endorsed the statement by the President of the Security Council of 4 November 1994 (S/PRST/1994/62) and felt that such consultations should be carried out routinely, as indicated in the letter dated 27 March 1996 from Chile addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/1996/224).

18. As to the financing of operations, Ecuador agreed with the premise in the Special Committee's report that the economically more developed countries should make larger contributions to peacekeeping operations than the economically less developed countries. In addition, States must pay their contributions in full, on time and without any conditions.

19. Ecuador agreed that in order to enhance the effectiveness of peacekeeping operations and prevent escalation of conflicts, rapid deployment mechanisms needed to be established and the potential of the United Nations in the areas of early resolution and preventive deployment needed to be strengthened.

20. Ecuador was particularly interested in paragraph 32 of the report (A/51/130) which stressed the importance for maintaining peace and preventing the escalation of conflicts of the pacific settlement of disputes through negotiation, inquiry, mediation, conciliation, arbitration, judicial settlement, resort to regional agencies or arrangements or other peaceful means chosen by the parties concerned. In that connection, close cooperation and interaction with regional organizations were important, since potential or actual conflicts could be settled more effectively through cooperation among neighbouring States.

21. Ecuador supported the proposal to expand the membership of the Special Committee at its next session.

22. Mr. ABDELLAH (Tunisia) said that in recent years there had been qualitative and quantitative changes in peacekeeping operations. The experience of conducting those operations had provided valuable lessons that deserved careful study. It was extremely important to observe the principles of territorial integrity and non-interference in States' internal affairs when planning United Nations missions. Experience showed that success could be achieved if the interested parties gave their consent and the tasks assigned were impartially implemented. In that connection, extreme circumspection must be shown when taking decisions on the use of force, which should be used only in exercise of the legitimate right of self-defence. As such action did not fall within the scope of Chapter VI of the Charter of the United Nations, it was perfectly clear that any actions involving the use of force to impose peace could be taken only on the basis of Chapter VII, and that that would require a new United Nations mandate and the allocation of adequate resources and means.

23. In cases where a peacekeeping mission was already under way, its duration or prolongation must be determined with reference to its specific objectives. Of course, certain factors, such as full cooperation on the part of the interested parties, were crucial to implementation of the operation, although it would be wrong to take a decision to curtail a mission because of budgetary considerations, thereby abandoning the population of the receiving State to the mercy of fate. It was regrettable that a shortage of funds should prevent the continuation of certain operations and have adverse effects on other aspects of peacekeeping activities, and, in particular, on reimbursement of the expenditures of countries contributing troops and technical support, which was particularly important in the case of the developing countries. It was also necessary to ensure observance of the fundamental principle of equitable geographical representation in recruitment of officials of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, as the practice of using experts whose services were paid for by their Governments was becoming ever more widespread. Although that also made it possible to economize on resources, it was perfectly clear that only through timely and full payment of their contributions by all States could the Organization's financial problems be solved.

24. The establishment of standby forces was an important initiative that made it possible to improve planning and expedite the deployment of United Nations missions. It was also necessary to develop partnerships between States wishing to participate in those forces and States ready to provide them with the wherewithal to do so, in order to increase the number of participants in the standby arrangements. The idea of establishing a rapidly deployable headquarters team was a constructive contribution to enhancing the system of standby forces. Member States must be kept regularly informed at all stages of that initiative, and the principle of transparency must be observed throughout the process of elaboration and implementation of the proposal. Participants in the meeting of the Special Committee held on 24 October 1996 had stressed that member States must take a definitive decision on the establishment of that mechanism after studying it in all its aspects. It would appear that the main problem was one of financing.

25. Note should also be taken of the measures adopted by the Security Council on 28 March 1996 aimed at improving the process of consultation between troop-contributing States, the Security Council and the Secretariat. That was all the more important because responsiveness to the opinions and views of those countries was fundamental to successful implementation of United Nations operations. Thus, institutionalization of consultations with troop-contributing States, through the establishment of an organ of the Security Council on the basis of Article 29 of the Charter, would enable those consultations to be conducted regularly and periodically. In addition, provision could also be made for participation by troop-contributing States in the work of the Council through broader interpretation of Article 31 of the Charter, pursuant to which the Council could invite States to participate in its work whenever a question affecting them was being discussed.

26. Special consideration should be given to cooperation between the United Nations and regional peacekeeping agencies in accordance with Chapter VIII of the Charter. It was necessary to support the efforts of the African States, particularly in the framework of the mechanism of the Organization of African

Unity (OAU) for prevention and settlement of conflicts in Africa, with a view to enhancing the effectiveness of cooperation between OAU and the United Nations. Tunisia welcomed the inclusions on its initiative, of two paragraphs in the Special Committee's report in which special attention was devoted to the need to improve arrangements for that cooperation. In that context, emphasis should be placed on the importance, in conflict prevention, not only of security issues but also of questions of socio-economic development. His delegation also welcomed the broadening of the composition of the Special Committee, as a result of which all interested States would be able to participate in its work.

27. Mr. CORVIN (Ireland), speaking on behalf of the European Union, and the associate countries of Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Lithuania, Poland, Romania and Slovakia, and, in addition, Iceland, welcomed the approach adopted by the Bureau of the Special Committee in its preparation of the draft resolution dealing with the agenda item under consideration, and noted with satisfaction that the Special Committee had been able to reach consensus on a recommendation providing for the enlargement of the Committee.

28. The European Union's attachment to the peacekeeping activities of the United Nations was demonstrated by the fact that its member States provided over one third of the contributions for peacekeeping operations in terms of logistics, matériel and personnel. Financially, its contributions accounted for more than 37 per cent of the costs of United Nations peacekeeping operations. At the end of September 1996 troop-contributing States had been owed an amount estimated by the Secretariat at almost US$ 1.5 billion, virtually half of which was owed to member States of the European Union. That situation could not be prolonged indefinitely, and all Member States in arrears must therefore pay their contributions and ensure that in future they honoured all their financial obligations in full, promptly and without conditions.

29. Noting the valuable service performed by the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations in putting forward recommendations and observations on how the practical and operational aspects of United Nations peacekeeping might be improved, the European Union wished to draw attention to some general considerations which would continue to underlie its approach to the work of the Special Committee on those matters. When considering, planning and implementing peacekeeping operations of all kinds, an integrated approach was necessary. The growing complexity of such multifunctional operations underlined the need for more effective coordination between the various components, as well as between the relevant United Nations departments and agencies. Furthermore, the Department of Peacekeeping Operations itself must draw on both current and past experiences to improve the planning, management, conduct and support of future operations.

30. The European Union strongly supported the development and strengthening of the system of standby arrangements and also welcomed the proposal of the Secretary-General to develop a rapidly deployable headquarters team based in the Department of Peacekeeping Operations. It should also be recalled that several member States of the European Union had individually made proposals for developing the rapid-deployment capability within the framework of the United Nations system of standby arrangements. There was a need to bear in mind the broader framework in which United Nations peacekeeping operated. The role of

the United Nations in that regard could be usefully regarded as a continuum of many actions, ranging from the initial task of preventive diplomacy and peacemaking, through peacekeeping, to the challenges of post-conflict peace-building, reconciliation and reconstruction.

31. Regional arrangements and agencies, including the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), could make an important contribution to the maintenance of international peace and security. In referring to the subject of cooperation among such organizations, the European Union would like to mention its close collaboration with the Organization of African Unity (OAU) in working to strengthen the latter's conflict prevention mechanism. It had also expressed its support for the Secretary-General's proposals aimed at improving preparedness for conflict prevention and peacekeeping in Africa, including through widening the participation of African countries in standby planning, developing "partnership" arrangements and intensifying cooperation with OAU.

32. A primary consideration for all troop-contributing countries was the issue of safety and security of United Nations personnel. Public support for participation in United Nations operations could be reinforced if the security and safety of those who served under the United Nations flag was increased. The European Union also wished to emphasize the necessity for all personnel deployed in the field to be both trained and equipped in a manner that maximized their safety and security.

33. Mr. DHUNGANA (Nepal) said that an important development in the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations had been the agreement to increase its membership through the inclusion of former and current troop-contributing nations. The establishment of a standing oversight group of senior officials within the framework for coordination among the Secretariat departments directly concerned with the prevention, control and resolution of conflicts was an important step taken by the Secretary-General to strengthen United Nations capacity for early warning and preventive action. A sustained flow of objective and accurate information being vital to the analysis and assessment of any potential conflict situation, the inclusion of the Department of Public Information in that group could be considered.

34. It should be noted that, in connection with the steady development of the system of standby arrangements, Nepal had made a commitment to contribute up to 2,000 troops and 200 police personnel for peacekeeping at the request of the Secretary-General under the Security Council's mandate. In support of the concept of the rapidly deployable operational headquarters team, Nepal had offered the services of six military officers for various positions on the implementation team.

35. Despite the decline in their number over the past year, United Nations peacekeeping operations had remained the most important means of conflict management and maintenance of international peace and security. Nepal had been among the active participants in United Nations peacekeeping operations for a long time. Over 30,000 of its troops had served the United Nations at various times and over 1,000 of its police personnel had served with various peacekeeping missions. Nepal's commitment to United Nations peacekeeping continued undiminished. Many of its peacekeepers had laid down their lives in

the line of duty. As a real tribute, the United Nations should compensate all of its peacekeepers at the same rate.

36. Mr. HE Yafei (China) said that, along with the gradual improvements in peacekeeping mechanisms, some disturbing phenomena had also emerged. In order to continue to play a proper role in new situations, United Nations peacekeeping operations must follow the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations, as well as some basic principles proven to be effective in practice. Among the prerequisites for their success, peacekeeping operations should be mandated by the Security Council and implemented by the Secretary-General subject to the Council's political guidance.

37. Currently, the number and scale of United Nations peacekeeping operations had been remarkably reduced. However, their functions and scope had been expanded or altered. That made it necessary for the United Nations to cooperate with other bodies in a realistic manner. Because of the current instability in the world, the Security Council should authorize the establishment of each peacekeeping operation with care, taking into account the actual situation of the conflict, the attitude of the parties concerned and the actual capability of the United Nations. In the view of his delegation, preventive diplomacy and post-conflict peace-building, areas where the United Nations had been increasingly active in recent years, were different from peacekeeping operations both in nature and in content. The relevant United Nations bodies should not confuse peacekeeping operations with peace-building activities; still less should they force extraneous elements into peacekeeping operations under the pretext that the funding issue was difficult to resolve.

38. Another pressing problem for United Nations peacekeeping operations was caused by delayed payment of assessed contributions by a number of countries. It was thought-provoking that some countries, on the one hand, by their failure to pay their assessed contributions, reduced the available resources, forcing the Department of Peacekeeping Operations to cut its staff drastically, while on the other hand, assigning large numbers of officers on loan to the Department to improve its capacity, thus changing its composition in a manner unfavourable to developing countries and seriously undermining the provision of the Charter stipulating respect for the international character of the responsibilities of the Secretary-General and Secretariat staff. The mobilization of resources through voluntary contributions could also have a serious impact on the financial basis of the Organization, casting doubt on the fairness and representative nature of the United Nations.

39. In conclusion, his delegation emphasized that currently, most peacekeeping operations were taking place in developing countries. Therefore, it was all the more necessary for the United Nations to ensure more institutional participation by developing countries in the discussion, decision-making and implementation of peacekeeping operations, in order to prevent a small number of countries from dictating peacekeeping policies. His delegation welcomed the recommendation to expand the membership of the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations, and believed that its expansion would facilitate greater participation by developing countries in the comprehensive study and review of peacekeeping operations.

40. Ms. HERNES (Norway) said that, since the maintenance of international peace and security was one of the primary objectives of the United Nations, Norway had proposed the establishment of a fund for preventive action.

41. Currently, peacekeeping operations were rarely purely military undertakings; they also entailed large-scale humanitarian and civilian operations. There was a need for clearer and more effective links between the actual military operations and political activity, and for greater consistency between mandate, mission and the resources provided. In addition, there must be greater efforts to improve liaison, communication and coordination among all the actors in order to ensure that their efforts were mutually reinforcing.

42. Norway was pleased to note that improvements had been made in a number of areas of United Nations peacekeeping activities. One example was the increased information-sharing and enhanced coordination of activities among the various United Nations departments. Nevertheless, her delegation believed that additional measures should be taken to improve the Organization's efficiency in that area, and looked forward to further strengthening of the ability of the United Nations system to respond in a rapid and coordinated manner to conflict situations. Norway welcomed, in that connection, the decision to establish a rapidly deployable headquarters team within the Department of Peacekeeping Operations. She was convinced that the unit would become an indispensable instrument for the implementation of carefully planned and coordinated measures in response to crisis situations. It was vital that there should be balanced geographical representation in the new unit. Norway therefore welcomed the proposal to establish a special trust fund for that purpose.

43. Norway was pleased to note the improvements made recently in a number of areas, such as the formulation of new regulations on reimbursement for contingent-owned equipment. There was a need to consider in the future whether some degree of authority for incurring expenses might not be delegated from Headquarters to the field level. It was also necessary to secure prompt start-up of operations in order to reduce the time which elapsed between the granting of mandates by the Security Council and the appropriation of funds. In addition, further attention must be given to the question of how the Department of Peacekeeping Operations could expedite the processing of claims for reimbursement by Member States, as well as the winding-up of operations and the liquidation of their accounts.

44. Norway had been and remained one of the major contributors to United Nations peacekeeping activities. Over the years, more than 50,000 people - over 1 per cent of Norway's population - had participated in peacekeeping operations. Currently, more than 700 Norwegian troops were serving under the United Nations flag. As a troop contributor, Norway welcomed the decision to widen the membership of the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations.

45. Miss DURRANT (Jamaica), speaking on behalf of the member States of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM), said that, as the Committee considered the question of United Nations peacekeeping operations, it must take careful stock of their missions and mandates. She welcomed, in that regard, the establishment of the Lessons Learned Unit and hoped that it would make a positive contribution to the enhancement of the efficiency of peacekeeping activities. There was a

need to formulate clear criteria to guide the implementation of peacekeeping operations. They must take into account the rules of engagement governing such operations and include clear goals and objectives. She welcomed, in that connection, the fact that the reports of the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations emphasized the need for adequate public information with regard to peacekeeping operations. There could be no doubt that measures aimed at enhancing the ability of peacekeepers to disseminate information on their activities among the communities in which they operated would make a positive contribution to the success of missions.

46. The CARICOM member States fully endorsed the view that all peacekeeping operations should strictly observe the principles laid down in the Charter of the United Nations and that they should be conducted in accordance with the mandate given by the Security Council. They also supported the point made in the report of the Special Committee that adequate resources must be made available to each mission. In addition, it was important to stress the need to separate peacekeeping and peace-enforcement efforts. When the two became mixed, or the lines between them blurred, the chance of failure on both counts increased substantially.

47. The CARICOM member States were firmly convinced that the international community could not stand by impassively in the face of conflict situations. They therefore emphasized the need for a multifaceted approach to the issue of peacekeeping, peacemaking and conflict prevention. They supported the report's conclusion that efforts to foster the peaceful settlement of disputes through conciliation, mediation and other such measures, as well as recourse to regional organizations and other appropriate bodies, were important. They also believed that development programmes should be viewed as a valuable mechanism for addressing some of the problems which often led to tension and conflicts. When a community was able to satisfy the basic socio-economic needs of its population, a significant source of possible tension was eliminated. They wished therefore to reiterate the need for development to be considered as an important aspect of peacekeeping and peacemaking. They welcomed the close coordination between the Departments of Political Affairs, Humanitarian Affairs and Peacekeeping Operations in the comprehensive effort to deal with interrelated concerns in the peacekeeping area.

48. Recent events had demonstrated the need for the United Nations to develop the capacity to react rapidly to situations of heightened tension where such a response could serve to prevent hostilities and secure peace. In that connection, the CARICOM member States supported the efforts to establish a rapidly deployable headquarters team, which would enhance the capacity of the international community to respond quickly to situations in which conflicts could be averted through timely and appropriate action.

49. Her delegation believed that priority must be given to the prompt reimbursement of troop-contributing countries, and urged States to fulfil their obligation to contribute to the peacekeeping budget in a timely manner.

50. Mr. ÁLVAREZ (Uruguay) said that the issues under consideration were of paramount importance, and were basic to peacekeeping operations and the work of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations. Attention should be focused first

and foremost on the problem of delayed reimbursements to troop-contributing countries, which increased the burden on States contributing matériel, particularly developing countries. It could be concluded that the position of countries which did not pay their peacekeeping contributions was out of step with the efforts and sacrifices of those countries which contributed equipment for use by peacekeeping contingents. Efforts should be intensified to reach a timely and practical solution to the problem.

51. One of the most important issues being discussed at the present session was undoubtedly that of a rapidly deployable headquarters team in accordance with the recommendations submitted by the Secretariat at the previous session of the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations. His Government supported the concept of rapid deployment and believed that its useful role in averting conflicts and reducing deployment time was obvious and widely recognized.

52. It was noteworthy that consultations had taken place without the involvement of those countries which provided the bulk of the troops for peacekeeping operations in the various regions of the world. That was not the first time that countries which had put forward numerous peacekeeping initiatives had forgotten about the troop contributors, without which peacekeeping operations could not be conducted effectively. Uruguay, as a country which was making a significant contribution to such operations in regional terms, demanded the opportunity to participate in such consultations.

53. Another issue of concern to his delegation was the method of financing that had been used for the first eight posts in the initial stages of implementing the project. His delegation believed that those posts should be financed without recourse to so-called "loaned" officers. The correct course of action would be to finance such posts at the Organization's expense, but if such an option was impossible, they should be financed from voluntary contributions in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter regarding the need to comply with the principle of widest possible geographical representation. It seemed that a far simpler approach should be taken to resolving the financial problem. Peacekeeping activities were part of the most important task of the Organization, namely the maintenance of international peace and security. Bearing in mind that the urgent need to establish a rapid deployment force was universally recognized, it was surprising that an Organization in the midst of a restructuring which allowed it to reduce its staffing table by over 1,000 posts could not find a way to convert a mere eight posts in order to supplement and optimize the staffing table of the most important department in the Organization. Nor were any efforts being made to study the possibility of appointing officers currently working in the staffs of ongoing peacekeeping operations to the rapidly deployable headquarters team, at minimal cost to the United Nations.

54. Mr. JAYANAMA (Thailand), speaking on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement, said that the Movement recognized and supported the important role of peacekeeping operations in ensuring international peace and security, and was making a significant contribution to activities in that field. It must be emphasized that peacekeeping operations were ad hoc measures for preventing conflict situations from escalating while ways to resolve the conflict peacefully were being pursued. The use of force as a means for maintaining

peace and security should be utilized only as the last resort when all possible options had been exhausted.

55. In the decision-making process with regard to the establishment of peacekeeping operations, the following guiding principles had to be borne in mind. First, peacekeeping operations should strictly observe the principles and purposes enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations, particularly with regard to the principles of sovereignty, territorial integrity and political independence of States, and non-intervention in matters within the domestic jurisdiction of any State. Second, certain basic principles of peacekeeping were essential to its success, such as consent of the parties, impartiality, and the non-use of force except in self-defence. Third, peacekeeping operations should be conducted with clearly defined mandates, objectives, command structures and secure financing.

56. The Non-Aligned Movement believed that the membership of the Special Committee should be expanded, since it was the only United Nations forum that discussed in depth all aspects of peacekeeping operations. In that regard, the Movement welcomed the relevant draft resolution. With regard to the staffing of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, it should be noted that, despite the financial crisis and the crisis arising from non-payment of contributions, the Non-Aligned Movement wished to reiterate that the use of "loaned" or "gratis" officers was not the real solution for the difficulties the Department was facing. The Non-Aligned Movement was seriously concerned about the imbalance between personnel funded out of the Organization's regular budget and "loaned" or "gratis" personnel. It was alarming to note that some of the Department's important divisions were staffed wholly by loaned personnel. The Non-Aligned Movement was convinced that in the recruitment of the Department's personnel, the principle of equitable geographical representation should be fully taken into account in accordance with Articles 100 and 101 of the Charter.

57. In connection with the issue of financing peacekeeping operations, the Non-Aligned Movement believed that adequate financial resources and support were crucial to the effectiveness of the operations. Expenses for peacekeeping operations were to be borne by Member States in accordance with the existing special scale of assessment established by resolution 3101 (XXVIII) of 11 December 1973, which took account of the special responsibilities of the five permanent members of the Security Council and certain other economic considerations. The Non-Aligned Movement was therefore pleased to note that the Special Committee's report had mentioned that the economically more developed countries should make relatively larger contributions to peacekeeping operations. It was also important to bear in mind the special responsibility of the Security Council, as indicated in General Assembly resolution 1874 (S-IV) of 27 June 1963. At the same time, the Non-Aligned Movement noted with deep regret that certain developed countries were not paying their contributions. The Movement urged all Member States to pay their contributions in full, on time, and without conditions in order to enable the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and the peacekeeping operations themselves to function efficiently.

58. With regard to the reimbursement of the costs of troop-contributing countries, it was regrettable that the Organization's current indebtedness to the 71 countries contributing troops and equipment for 16 peacekeeping

operations amounted to about $1.44 billion. Almost $400 million of that amount was owed to developing countries. The Movement of Non-Aligned Countries also noted with regret the report of the Office of Internal Oversight Services covering activities for the period from July 1995 to June 1996 (A/51/432), which stated that in the past year millions of dollars had been lost as a result of waste, fraud and malfeasance in 16 peacekeeping operations. The officers responsible for those malpractices should be identified and disciplinary measures taken against them.

59. However, there were some positive developments with respect to death and disability compensation. The Movement of Non-Aligned Countries believed that a uniform scale for such compensation should be established in the United Nations. It was pleased to learn that efforts were already being made in that respect and hoped that the new scale would be introduced in the near future.

60. With regard to rapid deployment and standby arrangements, the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries recognized the need to improve the ability of the United Nations to deploy peacekeeping operations expeditiously and it supported the establishment and development of the standby system. At present DPKO was working on another measure designed to improve that ability, namely the rapidly deployable mission headquarters (RDMHQ). In connection with the findings of the special session of the Special Committee, the Non-Aligned Movement had to agree that some doubts remained on such issues as staffing, functions and financing of the proposed unit. The many questions which had been raised in that regard at the special session must be carefully examined in order to determine the most appropriate ways and means of financing and staffing the unit.

61. The Movement of Non-Aligned Countries had always attached great importance to consultations between the Security Council, the Secretariat and troop-contributing countries. It believed that all decisions of the Security Council on all aspects of peacekeeping operations must be arrived at in a transparent manner. In that regard it welcomed the statement of the President of the Security Council of 28 March 1996 concerning meetings of troop-contributing countries. It was to be hoped that that first step would actually lead to improvement and institutionalization of the consultation mechanism, which in turn could help to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of peacekeeping operations.

62. Mr. ZAKI (Egypt) said that for many years Egypt had been conscientiously fulfilling its commitments, for it understood the noble task of the United Nations in the maintenance of peace. As the country providing the Rapporteur of the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations, Egypt wished to make a number of comments on current peacekeeping operations. Serious efforts must be made in the area of preventive diplomacy, and if conflicts did break out the United Nations, and especially the Security Council, must swiftly establish peacekeeping operations with clearly defined mandates. The enhancement of the effectiveness of the United Nations and of its capacity to take action swiftly in a crisis was one of the most important matters requiring attention. The Egyptian delegation endorsed the initiatives to increase the Organization's operational effectiveness and believed that the decisions should be taken on the basis of consensus and in a transparent manner. In connection with the funding of posts in DPKO it referred to General Assembly resolution 48/226, which

requested the Secretary-General to submit a report on the question and intimated that the existing practice must not be continued. His delegation was particularly worried about the information provided in the report of the Office of Internal Oversight Services, which noted a number of malpractices in peacekeeping operations. It called for an investigation to identify the persons responsible for those malpractices. It also expressed the hope that the consultations between the Security Council and troop-contributing countries would be continued and lead to cooperation between them at a qualitatively new level. As one of the founder members of the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations, Egypt supported its recommendations for expansion of the Committee's membership and expressed the hope that such a move would lead to improvements in the financing of peacekeeping operations. It commended the efforts of the United Nations to improve its cooperation with regional organizations in peacekeeping operations and would endeavour to support those efforts by encouraging cooperation between the Organization of African Unity and the United Nations in accordance with Chapter VIII of the Charter of the United Nations.

63. Mr. CHOWDHURY (Bangladesh) said that despite a significant scaling-down of personnel in existing United Nations peacekeeping operations the peacekeepers continued to carry out multidimensional activities and were still confronted by difficulties of every kind.

64. Bangladesh strongly supported the recommendations contained in the draft resolution on the transformation of the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations into an open-ended body and expressed its wish to participate in the work of the expanded Committee. The most important needs in a peacekeeping mission were clearly defined mandates and rules of engagement, and knowledge of situations on the ground. In that regard the United Nations should establish an early-warning mechanism so that conflicts could be nipped in the bud. His delegation agreed with other delegations on the need for clear-cut political direction and a unified command and control structure for each operation, with an indication of the specific responsibilities and authority of each commanding officer.

65. His delegation commended the efforts to consolidate the standby arrangements, but it was difficult for Bangladesh, as for other small countries with resource constraints, to provide equipment for use in different terrains and locations. In that connection it urged States which were unable to provide troops at least to provide equipment in order to facilitate the speedy deployment of peacekeeping operations.

66. His delegation supported the concept of a rapidly deployable headquarters team and considered that the widest spectrum of countries should be represented in it. With the establishment of the proposed trust fund, such wide participation would become a reality, and Bangladesh wished to have an opportunity to contribute military personnel to such a team.

67. His delegation was deeply concerned at the prevalent practice of "loan officers" in the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, since there was a wide disparity in the number of personnel from the developed and developing countries. The United Nations must conduct a review and study of that system and make recruitment of personnel, both at Department headquarters and in the

field, on the basis of the procedure set forth in Articles 100 and 101 of the Charter of the United Nations.

68. Bangladesh shared the concern of other delegations at the reluctance of some countries to contribute to the financing of peacekeeping operations, since that had an adverse impact on the reimbursement of troop-contributing countries, particularly those from developing countries and, even more, from such least developed countries as Bangladesh. All Member States, particularly the developed States, which were in a position to do so, should pay their contributions in full and on time and, most importantly, without conditions and in accordance with their existing scales of assessment. In that respect, his delegation wished to emphasize that peacekeeping resources should not be at the expense of resources for United Nations development activities.

69. An important issue of concern to his delegation was the practice of applying unjust formulas to determine the amount of compensation to be paid in the case of death or disability, which resulted in different levels of compensation depending on the country of origin. That was especially discouraging when practised in the United Nations where, according to the Charter, all Member States were equal. That anomaly must be removed and a uniform scale of compensation for death and disability must be applied irrespective of the country of origin of those receiving compensation.

70. His delegation stressed its commitment to peacekeeping, which was a vital aspect of United Nations activities. Bangladesh was proud of the fact that it continued to be one of the largest troop contributors. In conclusion, his delegation wished to pay special tribute to all the men and women who, as United Nations peacekeepers, had sacrificed their lives for the sake of peace.

71. Mr. OTHMAN (Joint Inspection Unit), introducing the report of the Joint Inspection Unit (JIU), entitled "Military component of United Nations peacekeeping operations" (A/50/576), said that, in the report, JIU had considered a number of relevant issues and advanced recommendations under three general topics: (a) the managerial aspects of mandates for peacekeeping; (b) the availability of troops and equipment; and (c) the capacity of the United Nations Secretariat to cope with the tasks entrusted to it.

72. Under the first topic, JIU discussed the roles of the members of the Security Council, troop-contributing countries and the United Nations Secretariat. The Unit recommended the participation of troop-contributing countries in the consultations prior and subsequent to the development of a peacekeeping mandate and the formation of an operative plan for implementing that mandate. With regard to the second topic, JIU pointed to two major problems: the readiness of troops to participate actively in peacekeeping operations and the timely deployment of troops. It discussed some of the ongoing efforts to improve the effectiveness of United Nations peacekeeping operations. Under the third topic in the report, JIU dealt with the functioning and restructuring of different departments, in particular the Department of Peacekeeping Operations.

73. Two of the specific recommendations made by JIU called upon the Secretary-General to ensure that the Department of Peacekeeping Operations built up

skilled personnel, both military and civilian, amongst whom a rapidly deployable temporary headquarters team could be dispatched to the field, and to carry out the full integration of the Field Administration and Logistics Division within the Department of Peacekeeping Operations.

74. Mr. KRASULIN (Joint Inspection Unit), introducing the JIU report entitled "Sharing responsibilities in peacekeeping: the United Nations and regional organizations" (A/50/571), said that the main reason for preparing the report had been the fact that the number of the United Nations peacekeeping operations had increased dramatically in recent years and, as a result, the Organization's capacity to carry out peacekeeping activities had been overextended. There was a need to share responsibilities for collective security with other organizations.

75. The report put forward the findings and recommendations of a JIU study on cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations in maintaining peace and security. Its objective was to contribute to the current efforts to increase the involvement of regional operations in collective security in the hope that that would ease the burden on the United Nations.

76. The main conclusions and recommendations in that regard were: to prepare and submit to the General Assembly for consideration a comprehensive strategic programme of cooperation with regional organizations in peacekeeping and other peace-related activities, for the development of which it was necessary to establish a project team composed of representatives of all departments concerned; to conclude bilateral framework agreements between United Nations and regional organizations concerning practical aspects of peacekeeping and other peace-related activities; and to create a mechanism for cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations.

77. The General Assembly might wish to encourage Member States and regional organizations to place their facilities and human resources for standardized training at the disposal of the United Nations, other regional organizations and Member States. The Joint Inspection Unit had recommended that consideration should be given to the possibility of establishing different funds on the basis of voluntary contributions for peacekeeping activities of regional organizations.

The meeting rose at 12.50 p.m.

UNITED NATIONS

General Assembly

FIFTY-FIRST SESSION

Official Records

SPECIAL POLITICAL COMMITTEE
(FOURTH COMMITTEE)
16th meeting
held on
Monday, 18 November 1996
at 3 p.m.
New York

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 16th MEETING

Chairman: Mr. KITTIKHOUN (Lao People's Democratic Republic)

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AGENDA ITEM 86: COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW OF THE WHOLE QUESTION OF PEACEKEEPING OPERATIONS IN ALL THEIR ASPECTS (continued)

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The meeting was called to order at 3.05 p.m.

AGENDA ITEM 86: COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW OF THE WHOLE QUESTION OF PEACEKEEPING OPERATIONS IN ALL THEIR ASPECTS (continued) (A/51/98-S/1996/270, A/51/130, A/C.4/51/L.9 and L.10*)

1. Mr. ABDULLAH AHMAD (Malaysia) said that the importance of United Nations peacekeeping operations in the maintenance of international peace and security could not be denied. Those operations, however, constituted only one of the measures which the Organization could take in the area of conflict resolution. Perhaps it would be more important to strengthen preventive diplomacy with a view to averting the eruption of major conflicts in different parts of the world. Moreover, if solutions to conflicts were to be permanent, peacekeeping must go hand in hand with peace-building.

2. While peacekeeping operations were not the ultimate solution but rather a measure of last resort, the United Nations had recently been compelled to launch an increasing number of such operations. It was imperative that they should be carried out within a framework of impartiality, that their mandates and objectives should be clearly defined and that they should be adequately financed. Only on that basis would United Nations peacekeeping operations enjoy the support of the international community and have a greater chance of success.

3. The deplorable financial situation of the United Nations continued to give cause for concern. The major contributors' arrears in the payment of their assessed contributions to the regular budget had forced the United Nations to borrow from its peacekeeping accounts, thereby delaying payment to troop-contributing States for expenses relating to troops and equipment. That could affect the participation of Member States, particularly the developing countries, in future peacekeeping operations. His delegation therefore urged Member States to honour their obligations and pay outstanding debts and current contributions on time and without conditions. It also urged the Secretary-General to accord the highest priority to the early settlement of all pending claims and to ensure that reimbursement took place in a timely fashion.

4. While the secondment of loaned officers had contributed to the easing of the financial burden of the United Nations, his delegation was concerned at the Organization's increasing dependency on personnel loaned by Member States. That had also created an imbalance in the representation of developing countries. Most of the loaned officers were from developed countries and many of them had been assigned to key posts in the Department of Peacekeeping Operations. His delegation therefore urged that the recruitment of loaned officers in the Department of Peacekeeping Operations should be guided as far as possible by the principle of equitable geographical representation.

5. Standby arrangements had been established in order to ensure that troop deployment for peacekeeping operations occurred with the necessary speed. Thus far, 54 countries had agreed to participate in those arrangements. Malaysia was one of the five countries which had signed the memorandum of understanding establishing them. His delegation welcomed the efforts of the Secretary-General to develop further and improve those arrangements, and trusted that the Secretariat would continue to brief Member States in that regard. His

delegation urged Member States to cooperate closely with the Department of Peacekeeping Operations in order to improve the ability of United Nations technicians to respond effectively and rapidly in crisis situations.

6. His delegation shared the concern of other delegations over the length of time currently required to deploy peacekeeping operations after the Security Council established their mandates. It therefore fully supported the establishment of the rapidly deployable headquarters team in the Secretariat, which would not only save time, but also, and more importantly, would help to save lives. However, it shared the concern voiced on several occasions by the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries concerning the methodology to be used in setting up the headquarters, with regard to both staffing and funding. Bearing in mind that not all developing countries were in a position to provide officers gratis, ample consultation on the matter with all Member States was of paramount importance. With regard to financing, his delegation supported the proposal of the Secretary-General to establish a trust fund for the rapidly deployable mission headquarters, and agreed that the principle of equitable geographical distribution should be duly taken into account in the selection of officers for the headquarters.

7. As for training, his delegation requested the Secretariat to seek regular, predictable sources of financing for the Lessons Learned Unit of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, to keep Member States informed of its activities and to make available to them all studies carried out by the Unit as expeditiously as possible. It also urged the Committee to promote greater sharing of peacekeeping training experience and expertise among Member States. In 1996, his Government had established its own peacekeeping training centre with the objective of training military observers, staff officers and civilian police. The centre would be open to foreign participants.

8. At the previous meeting of the Special Committee, a number of countries, including Malaysia, had expressed support for making the Special Committee open-ended. Since it was the only forum that dealt in depth with all aspects of peacekeeping operations, all Member States should have an opportunity to be actively involved in its work. In that connection, he welcomed the draft resolution which proposed including those Member States that met the conditions stipulated in the report of the Special Committee (A/51/130) in its membership.

9. Mr. BARG (Libyan Arab Jamahiriya) said that United Nations activities to maintain international peace and security were increasingly important, especially in view of the constant eruption of conflicts and civil wars and the suffering of millions of people who endured severe hardship, either as a result of countries' internal strife or because of external intervention. That situation affected not only specific countries, but the entire international community as well; it was therefore necessary to find ways to prevent the spread of those conflicts from one region to another.

10. In the light of the efforts made in the field of peacekeeping and the experience gained in that regard, it was appropriate to reaffirm the principles that should govern those operations. First, peacekeeping operations must observe the purposes and principles of the United Nations, especially the principle of non-intervention in the internal affairs of States unless the parties to the conflict agreed that such intervention was needed. Second, the

same standards must apply to interventions in all parts of the world, and no country should be allowed to seek to advance its own petty aims or strategic interests. In that connection, the international community must attach greater importance to the problems of Africa. Third, dispute settlement processes between the parties should be encouraged, since they could help to alleviate the suffering of peoples and to limit the deployment of international forces; the use of preventive diplomacy should be promoted to prevent conflicts from escalating. Fourth, all States must pledge not to foment ethnic conflicts and to provide economic assistance to poorer countries in order to help prevent conflicts and keep them from spreading.

11. He reaffirmed the importance of the role of regional organizations in peacekeeping operations, since such organizations were more familiar with the regions and circumstances in which conflicts arose; if they were given the material and political support they needed, they could effectively help to reduce internal and other conflicts at the regional level. Lastly, he shared the view of other countries that peacekeeping operations were not the only means of settling disputes and that they should be carried out only when all other means had been exhausted. Moreover, the Department of Peacekeeping Operations should be expanded and the principle of equitable geographical distribution should be observed in its composition.

12. Mr. MACEDO (Mexico) said that his country attached special importance to the recommendation to expand the Special Committee's membership, since he was sure that the contributions of other States Members of the United Nations would enrich the Special Committee's work.

13. Peacekeeping operations, which had no explicit legal basis in the Charter of the United Nations, had become one of the Organization's primary instruments for dealing with conflicts; however, they were not the best means of settling disputes. The Organization's efforts could not replace those of the parties concerned to reach agreements that would end their differences. Peace must be born of the will of the parties in conflict. The consent of the parties to the establishment, deployment and functioning of a peacekeeping operation was essential to its success. In addition, peacekeeping operations must have a clear and specific mandate and their scope must be determined in advance. Although some degree of flexibility was needed, activities should abide by the mandates decided upon by the Security Council.

14. With respect to the establishment of a rapidly deployable United Nations force, it must be borne in mind that the speed of the Organization's intervention in a given conflict would not lead to a lasting solution if the political will of the parties was lacking. In addition, a strict legal definition of the mandate and functions of such a force would be necessary. It would be unacceptable for the force to be used in internal conflicts or to act without the express consent of all the parties concerned, since the sovereignty of States was a principle that could not be compromised. From a practical standpoint, it seemed inappropriate to design mechanisms that could impose onerous financial burdens on the Organization and its Members.

15. Chapter VII of the Charter referred exclusively to actions taken collectively to penalize a country which violated the international legal order. Such actions represented a last resort which should be used only when all of the

other means provided for in the Charter had been exhausted. The Mexican Government was therefore concerned about the proliferation of mandates which almost routinely invoked that set of exceptional procedures. The matter was not a trivial one. Repeatedly invoking Chapter VII did not strengthen the Organization, but only revealed its incompetence and lack of imagination.

16. One issue addressed by the Special Committee had been the staffing of the United Nations Department of Peacekeeping Operations, which comprised an undue proportion of so-called "loaned officers". Mexico did not question the capacity of those officers or the administrative benefits which the Organization could derive from their services, which were provided free of charge. However, that situation, which was irregular in any case, violated the provisions of the Charter and skewed the Department's orientation in favour of developed countries. Once again, therefore, Mexico called upon the United Nations Secretariat to correct that situation and to follow established procedures for the recruitment of international staff.

17. Mr. KAMAL (Pakistan) said that he supported the statement made by the representative of Thailand on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries. Pakistan's commitment to United Nations peacekeeping efforts was in line with its consistent policy of supporting all efforts to strengthen the Organization's role in preserving international peace and security. Pakistan continued to be one of the largest troop contributors to the various United Nations peacekeeping operations. Moreover, it had offered to provide an infantry battalion for the United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara (MINURSO) and two brigades for the United Nations standby forces proposed by the Secretary-General.

18. Several points were particularly important and bore repeating. First, preventive diplomacy, peacemaking and post-conflict peace-building were the cornerstones of United Nations peace efforts. The United Nations should develop an early warning mechanism that would enable it to act before the outbreak of conflicts instead of intervening after they had already erupted. Second, peacekeeping operations could not function effectively without clear political guidelines, precise mandates, effective command and control structures and well-defined rules of engagement. Third, the mandate, character and duration of peacekeeping operations should not be altered. The Security Council must stay abreast of the operations at all stages, and the United Nations Secretariat should ensure a smooth transition from preventive diplomacy to peacekeeping. Fourth, the concept of standby forces must be addressed in a manner that would enable developing countries to participate with a full complement of the requisite weapon systems. Moreover, the complex issues raised by the proposed United Nations rapid deployment team should be discussed in a transparent manner with all interested Member States. Fifth, the Department of Peacekeeping Operations must abide by the principle of due geographical representation in its staffing structure. Representation should be commensurate with troop contributions in the field. Sixth, assessed contributions must be paid in full and on time. The non-reimbursement of troop contributors restricted the participation of Member States, particularly developing ones, in current and future peacekeeping operations. Seventh, all troops performed the same tasks and faced similar risks, irrespective of their origin or nationality; accordingly, there should be a uniform scale of death and disability compensation.

19. The shortage of financial resources seemed to be the bane of United Nations peacekeeping operations. The answer did not lie in the subcontracting of the responsibilities of the United Nations to others, as would occur with the establishment of the rapidly deployable headquarters team. A solution had to be found within the principles and procedures of multilateralism and collective security of the United Nations. The discussions of the Special Committee on the issue had been inconclusive. Many doubts remained, and it was hoped that the Secretariat would provide answers and set a firm date for further discussions on the issue prior to finalization of any plans for the staffing of the proposed headquarters.

20. The issue of military officers on loan to the Department of Peacekeeping Operations had been extensively discussed during the previous sessions of the Special Committee, and an overwhelming majority of Member States, including the non-aligned countries, had expressed serious concerns in that regard and had called for a halt to that practice. However, the number of loaned officers continued to increase and the Secretariat had not provided the information requested by many delegations about the issue. Lastly, Pakistan was deeply concerned over the adverse effects that the deteriorating financial situation had on the reimbursement of troop costs and the use of contingent-owned equipment. That alarming situation was threatening the continuance of operations.

21. Mr. OLIYNYK (Ukraine) said that the peacekeeping operations of the United Nations had taken on a complex and multifunctional character. The disappointing experience of some recent peacekeeping operations had demonstrated that lasting peace could not be achieved without the political will of the parties to the conflict. Moreover, the parties should comply with the ceasefire agreements and cooperate fully and in good faith. His delegation was convinced that the success of any peacekeeping operation depended on the development of a clear and comprehensive concept for deploying and implementing operations, with realistic objectives and a mandate that did not allow any changes in the rules during its implementation. At the same time, every operation should be deployed with the strength necessary to achieve the tasks entrusted to it and should have the ability to protect itself. Otherwise, the credibility of the United Nations as well as the safety of its personnel would be undermined.

22. As far as "regional approaches" to peacekeeping operations were concerned, United Nations activities must be based on the provisions of Chapter VIII of the Charter of the United Nations, and must comply strictly with the principle that no State could arrogate to itself the right to be the main guarantor of peace and security in the region. Ukraine considered participation in United Nations peacekeeping operations as one of its foreign policy priorities and had been a significant troop contributor since the first year of its independence. One element that had enabled it to participate in such activities had been its active cooperation with the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) within the "Partnership for Peace" programme, which had also demonstrated the operational and tactical compatibility of Ukrainian military units with those of NATO member States.

23. His delegation considered it important and urgent to further enhance the capacity of the United Nations to respond promptly to crisis situations in the world, and supported the adoption of specific measures to strengthen the system

of standby arrangements. In February 1994, Ukraine had expressed its willingness to participate in such arrangements and had informed the Secretariat about the specific military resources that it could provide. The rapidly deployable headquarters team would be an important complement to the existing standby arrangements.

24. The safety of United Nations personnel should be an integral part of the mandate of any peacekeeping operation. The Organization and its Member States should take all necessary measures to ensure that such staff had an adequate level of security, since the current situation was not satisfactory. It was disturbing that in the short period of time since September 1995, 56 members of peacekeeping forces had lost their lives in the line of duty. In that regard, the entry into force of the Convention on the Safety of United Nations Peacekeeping and Associated Personnel, adopted by the General Assembly in 1994, would constitute a step in the right direction. Unfortunately, thus far, only 43 States had signed the Convention and nine had become parties to it, although 71 Member States currently took part in United Nations peacekeeping activities. That was why his delegation had taken the initiative of formulating the draft resolution contained in document A/C.4/51/L.10, jointly sponsored by many Member States, which urged all States to consider ratifying, accepting, approving or acceding to the Convention. His delegation attached great importance to the proposal to expand the membership of the Special Committee, the only specialized forum dealing with the vital problems related to peacekeeping operations. His delegation also considered it unfair that some troop-contributing countries, including Ukraine, were not represented at all in the Department of Peacekeeping Operations.

25. While his delegation welcomed the statement of the President of the Security Council on 28 March 1996 (S/PRST/1996/13), on arrangements to strengthen the consultative mechanism between the Security Council and troop-contributing countries, it would favour further steps in that direction, in particular, the institutionalization of the consultative process on the basis of Article 29 of the Charter.

26. His delegation was greatly concerned about the use of landmines in areas of conflict and the serious danger that they posed to civilians and to United Nations peacekeepers. That was why it welcomed the important initiative taken by Germany aimed at changing the approach to that long-standing and complicated problem, and supported the statement by the President of the Security Council on demining in the context of peacekeeping operations. However, the measures proposed in that statement were not exhaustive. His delegation hoped that during the next session of the Special Committee that issue would be thoroughly considered.

27. Mr. PARK (Republic of Korea) said that although the number of United Nations peacekeepers had declined considerably over the past year, the importance of their role in maintaining international peace and security, and the complexity of their task had not diminished. The multidimensional, intra-State nature of conflicts required that United Nations peacekeeping operations should be equipped with the skills to tackle a variety of military, political, humanitarian and civilian problems.

28. His delegation welcomed the steps taken by the Department of Peacekeeping Operations to enhance its capacity to plan and direct complex peacekeeping missions, and encouraged the Secretariat to continue to refine the machinery of peacekeeping and to seek more efficient ways of ensuring the success of peacekeeping operations. There was a pressing need for greater conceptual clarity in addressing peacekeeping-related issues. It was important, for example, that a clear distinction should be drawn between peacekeeping and peace-enforcement, and that all peacekeeping operations should strictly observe the principles of impartiality, the consent of the parties, and the non-use of force except in self-defence. It was also imperative that each of the three core components of peacekeeping - mandates, resources and objectives - should be given equal consideration. In that context, the discussions in the Informal Open-ended Working Group on An Agenda for Peace on the issues of preventive diplomacy, peacemaking, sanctions, coordination and post-conflict peace-building, could play a crucial role in tightening the conceptual focus.

29. As an active participant in United Nations peacekeeping operations and a non-permanent member of the Security Council, the Republic of Korea welcomed the newly established process for consultations between troop-contributing countries, the Security Council and the Secretariat and encouraged the Council to continue to improve the consultation process with the aim of enhancing the legitimacy, effectiveness, credibility and transparency of the Council's work in the field of peacekeeping.

30. There was a vital need to improve the rapid deployment capability of the United Nations. He therefore welcomed the Secretariat's proposal for the development of a rapidly deployable headquarters capacity as an effective complement to the standby arrangements system. In implementing the proposal, special attention should be focussed on three critical areas: geographical representation, transparency and methods of funding. The Republic of Korea also supported the Secretariat's proposal that the mission headquarters' personnel should be a combination of personnel nominated by Member States, existing Secretariat staff and other individuals earmarked within their home countries for training or actual deployment. It also welcomed the Secretariat's suggestion to establish a trust fund to cover the mission headquarters' personnel costs for those Member States which were unable to provide personnel gratis. Although questions had been raised about the sustainability of the trust fund and those questions should be addressed in ongoing deliberations, he believed that such a fund would be the most viable option, in light of the current financial situation of the Organization.

31. In the conviction that peacekeeping operations could be successful only if they enjoyed the broad participation and endorsement of a large majority of Member States, the Republic of Korea supported the recommendation of the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations to expand its membership and looked forward to furthering its contribution to the work of the Special Committee as a full-fledged member starting from the 1997 session.

32. Mr. ACOSTA (Venezuela) said that the end of the cold war had created great expectations about the role of the United Nations in the maintenance of international peace and security. However, the complexity of current conflicts, the economic and social imbalances affecting many countries and the seriousness of the Organization's financial crisis indicated that the international

community could not abandon its search for ways of meeting the challenges of the future, which appeared to exceed the Organization's capacity to achieve its principal objectives. Peacekeeping operations had become diversified and tended to be more complex and urgent. The experience of the United Nations in that field included successes and failures on which it was necessary to reflect in order to perfect the positive aspects while correcting the mistakes made. Based on that analysis, it might be possible to establish certain guidelines for action aimed at making peacekeeping operations an effective mechanism for resolving conflicts.

33. Notwithstanding the support from Member States for peacekeeping operations, in recent years the United Nations had adopted measures in that field which had provoked severe criticisms, particularly against the procedures used to launch certain operations, such as those undertaken in the former Yugoslavia, Somalia, Angola and Rwanda. It must be remembered therefore that such operations should be initiated in accordance with the Principles set out in Article 2 of the Charter and that peacekeeping forces should be deployed in accordance with the general criteria recognized by Member States, namely, that they should have the consent of the parties, have a clear and defined mandate, have the necessary personnel and equipment as well as guarantees of reliable funding, conduct themselves in an impartial manner and have unity of command under the Secretary-General. The observance of those criteria would forestall situations that impaired the credibility, universality and impartiality of the Organization in that field. Peacekeeping operations should be considered as a complement to efforts to resolve conflicts through negotiation and should not replace dialogue between the parties.

34. Given the increasing interrelationship between political, economic, social, military and cultural factors in conflicts, the concept of peacekeeping had been modified and had acquired a multidimensional and integral character. But, even though the international community could not remain indifferent to the suffering caused by war, that argument could not be used as justification for peacekeeping operations to take on tasks, such as those of a humanitarian nature, which were within the exclusive competence of other organs and bodies of the United Nations system. It was essential to better define the mandates of those organs and bodies and, at the same time, to improve coordination among them, with a view to safeguarding the political and financial capacity of the Organization.

35. In addition, even though peacekeeping operations were based on political considerations, they should not be used as an instrument of coercive action nor be confused with peace-enforcement mechanisms. The coercive measures provided for in Chapter VII of the Charter could be taken only in situations that were clearly defined as threats to the peace, breaches of the peace, and acts of aggression and not in an indiscriminate way. The time had come to define and adopt basic guidelines to achieve greater effectiveness in the planning, organization and deployment of peacekeeping operations. The political nature of such operations should guarantee their flexibility and strength and enable them to adapt to the complex characteristics of each conflict, based on the consent of the parties thereto.

36. There was need to continue the examination of issues related to the training and instruction of civilian, police and military personnel of the States participating in the operations, with due regard for the fact that the

responsibility for such training and instruction lay with the Organization and its Member States. The United Nations should consolidate its programmes in that area through a wider dissemination of information and the organization of national seminars and other similar activities, so that the Governments and authorities of the different countries could familiarize themselves with those activities, thus ensuring that a larger number of countries participated in the peacekeeping operations, without losing sight of the fact that not all States were equally prepared to contribute human and logistical support for the operations. It was essential to develop a standardized training programme which included practical courses and advisory services in basic areas with a view to providing systematic instruction to the personnel earmarked for such functions. In that connection, attention should be drawn to the recommendations contained in paragraphs 57 to 61 of the report of the Special Committee (A/51/130). More information and systematic training would enable Governments to better understand the concept of peacekeeping and help to reinforce the idea of establishing standby forces in each country, which would be mobilized only when authorization was given for peacekeeping operations, in conformity with the principles set out in the Charter and with the criteria accepted by all Member States. It would of course be for each Government to take the decision to participate in those operations.

37. It was necessary to consider in greater detail the initiative to establish a United Nations rapidly deployable headquarters team, taking due account of the political, legal, administrative and financial aspects of the initiative. The Secretary-General should be requested to prepare a report containing an analysis of the proposal and its ramifications. The proposal to transform the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations into an open-ended body also deserved support. In conformity with the Charter, the maintenance of international peace and security was the responsibility of all Member States. Moreover, the fact that peacekeeping operations were financed through a prorated system of mandatory contributions was clear proof that such operations were the collective responsibility of all Member States.

38. Mr. ABDULAI (Ghana) expressed appreciation for the statement made at the previous meeting by Mr. Kofi Annan, Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, on the work of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, and endorsed the statement made by the representative of Thailand on behalf of the States members of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries. He welcomed the initiatives adopted recently to enhance the effectiveness of peacekeeping operations, including the establishment of the Situation Centre and the Lessons Learned Unit, and the informal interdepartmental groups instituted to enhance coordination between the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, the Department of Humanitarian Affairs and the Department of Political Affairs. The ongoing discussions for the establishment of a rapidly deployable operational headquarters team in the Secretariat were a further indication of the common desire to improve the efficiency of operations through timely intervention to save lives and property in conflict areas.

39. Like other members of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, his country supported the concept of a rapidly deployable headquarters team and emphasized the importance of such a team being set up in a transparent manner, bearing in mind the multilateral character of the Organization and the letter and spirit of the Charter of the United Nations as it pertained to the independence of the

staff and to equitable geographical distribution. He expressed reservations again concerning the preponderance of loaned military staff from one region of the world in all strategic offices of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations; such creeping privatization of the Organization ran counter to the spirit of independence which should govern all the actions of each United Nations staff member. The independence of international civil servants and of the office of the Secretary-General, as the Secretary-General himself, Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali, had stressed in his Staff Day address on 13 September 1996, constituted the most precious asset of the Organization. Action must be taken promptly to safeguard such independence.

40. The current staffing situation was rooted in the financial crisis. It was to be hoped that all States in arrears would do their utmost to meet their commitments, so that the United Nations would be able to function effectively in all areas, including peacekeeping operations. Non-payment of assessed contributions affected not only the Organization, but also the small developing States which contributed troops and which could not be reimbursed on time for lack of funds. Non-payment also penalized the members of peacekeeping missions, particularly those from developing countries, who were sometimes compelled to serve under very difficult conditions, as the Organization could not afford to repair or replace their living quarters, equipment and vehicles. Those problems were compounded, in spite of the new reimbursement procedures, by bureaucratic bottlenecks which delayed reimbursements to troop-contributing countries, while in some peacekeeping operations, millions of dollars were lost through waste and malfeasance. He hoped that stringent measures would be taken urgently to rectify that situation.

41. His country was proud of having participated in United Nations peacekeeping operations for 36 years. According to figures released by the Department of Peacekeeping Operations for September 1996, Ghana was the fifteenth largest troop contributor, with 765 nationals serving in seven missions. He therefore welcomed the recommendation for an increase in the membership of the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations. All troop contributors should have the opportunity to participate as full members in the work of the Committee. His country was also proud of being one of the few countries to have signed the Memorandum of Understanding with the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, enabling it to participate in the standby arrangements system, and it called on other Member States to do the same. He also encouraged the Secretariat to pursue the efforts aimed at bringing the system into operation.

42. Mr. AYEWAH (Nigeria) said that the rapid expansion of United Nations peacekeeping operations since the end of the cold war reflected the belief in such operations as an effective instrument for stabilizing, containing and helping to resolve conflicts which undermined confidence among States and endangered international peace and security. Recent peacekeeping operations had resulted in both successes and failures. Unfortunately, the few failures had given rise to criticism, and had undermined the faith of some members of the international community in the viability of such operations. For that reason, certain Member States now wished for the United Nations to be less active in peacekeeping and to give greater emphasis to preventive measures, such as preventive diplomacy, preventive deployment and other forms of action, including the participation of regional organizations in containing crises. Clearly, there were no easy formulas for resolving certain conflicts, some of which were

rooted in the distant past. His country, which had extensive experience in United Nations and regional peacekeeping activities, was nearly certain that additional peacekeeping operations would be required in the future. It was therefore appropriate that the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations had, during its two previous sessions, undertaken a comprehensive review of peacekeeping operations, taking into account the experience of recent years, with a view to learning from the mistakes made and building on the successes achieved. He also welcomed the work accomplished by the Special Committee at its most recent session with regard to the formulation of guiding principles for the establishment and conduct of peacekeeping operations and the consideration of practical steps to ensure that future peacekeeping operations would have a sound logistical and financial basis. Only in that way could a coherent and integrated strategy for the prevention, management and resolution of conflicts be applied. Such a strategy must, inter alia, include preventive diplomacy, peacemaking and post-conflict peace-building.

43. He fully supported the recommendations made by the Special Committee in its current report, particularly those relating to consultations between the Security Council and troop contributors, measures to enhance the capacity of the United Nations for peacekeeping, training, rapid deployment and standby arrangements, the financing operations, cooperation with regional arrangements and the proposal to expand the membership of the Special Committee. Nevertheless, it must be noted that the most serious problem related to financing. The financial crisis of the United Nations, a consequence of the refusal of certain Member States to pay their assessed contributions, had created unacceptable situations, such as arrears in reimbursements to troop-contributing countries. Moreover, bearing in mind that some members of the national forces participating in such operations had given their lives for those efforts, and that the current system of death and disability benefits failed to take full account of their sacrifices, he supported the Secretary-General's proposal to standardize death and disability benefits for troops serving in peacekeeping operations through the establishment of a United Nations-administered global insurance scheme covering all troops.

44. Recent experience had shown that the timeliness of response to conflicts was crucial to the success of peacekeeping operations. In its 1995 report, the Special Committee had urged the Secretary-General to establish a rapidly deployable headquarters team in order to shorten the time lag between a Security Council decision authorizing an operation and its actual deployment. His country, like other members of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, had expressed concerns about the implementation of that proposal, and welcomed the additional information which the Secretariat had provided on the subject. Maximum support for the initiative could be ensured only through consultations with and the involvement of all Member States concerned. He also reiterated that the funding of such operations should be undertaken through assessed contributions so as to ensure that all Member States had an opportunity to participate fully.

45. The United Nations had primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security, but that function was not exclusive to the Organization. He recalled, in that connection, the recent successes of various regional and subregional groupings and arrangements in the management of conflicts. Regional involvement, whether in cooperation with the United Nations

or in response to the Organization's abdication of its responsibility, had helped to stabilize situations of conflict in many regions. In that regard, he highlighted the unique role played by the Organization of African Unity (OAU) and its cooperation with other regional organizations and the United Nations in the areas of preventive diplomacy, peacekeeping and peacemaking.

46. With respect to the staffing of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, Nigeria was concerned that recent reductions in the Headquarters staff of that Department might undermine its valuable work and threaten the success of future peacekeeping operations, if it led to the loss of the invaluable expertise built up over the years. The Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, Mr. Kofi Annan, had given assurances that the reorganization would not affect the Department's structural integrity; however, the increasing use of loaned and seconded officers was an indication that the vital services might not have been spread. Notwithstanding their valuable contributions to the United Nations, loaned officers were not a substitute for an independent international civil service that reflected as wide a geographical distribution as possible.

47. Mr. PHOMMAHAXAY (Lao People's Democratic Republic), said that, during its five decades of existence, the United Nations had been sorely tried in many conflicts in various parts of the world. That experience had helped to strengthen its role in solving world problems. Peacekeeping operations continued to play an important role in preventing the escalation of conflicts and creating conditions for the peaceful settlement of disputes. In view of the remarkable proliferation of peacekeeping operations, he was concerned about the increasing tendency to expand their nature and scope. Although his delegation supported any initiative aimed at strengthening the Organization's peacekeeping capabilities, it also expected that such initiatives would be considered with great caution, that past experiences would be taken into account and that peacekeeping operations would not be used as a means of interfering in the internal affairs of States. Any change in such operations must be in line with the guiding principles and definitions set forth in the report of the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations (A/51/130).

48. He reiterated the principles relevant to peacekeeping which had been adopted at the Eleventh Conference of Heads of State or Government of Non-Aligned Countries, held in Cartagena in 1995, to the effect that peacekeeping operations should strictly adhere to the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations, particularly the principles of respect for the sovereign equality and territorial integrity of States and non-interference in their internal affairs, and should be based on the consent of the parties concerned and the principle of impartiality. Missions must also have clearly defined mandates, objectives and time-frames, as well as assured financing. In that connection, all Member States must pay their contributions in full and on time, in compliance with their obligations under Article 17 of the Charter.

49. With respect to arrangements for consultation and exchange of information with troop-contributing countries, he welcomed the statement made by the President of the Security Council on 28 March 1996 (S/PRST/1996/13), in which the latter had indicated his readiness to chair consultations with troop contributors well before the Council took decisions on the existing mandate of an operation or on the establishment of a new operation. That practice would reinforce the Council's work methods and enhance the transparency of its

actions. However, the Council should also consult those who would be affected by its decisions; namely, the States or parties directly involved in the conflict, which should be given the right to present their views in the Council's informal consultations. Moreover, frequent consultations should be held with the countries bordering on the States in conflict to ensure their continued political support for peacekeeping operations. In the light of the increasing complexity of those missions, it was important to differentiate between peacekeeping operations and humanitarian activities. In addition, peacekeeping operations should not be established until all possibilities had been exhausted; even so, such operations should be of a temporary nature and should be undertaken with the consent of the parties.

50. The proposal to establish a rapidly deployable operational headquarters team was interesting, but many aspects remained to be clarified, particularly the precise methodology for setting up such a team. Another issue of concern was the fact that the Department of Peacekeeping Operations had a growing number of officers on loan and a shrinking number of posts financed from the regular budget and the support account for peacekeeping operations. The use of loaned personnel, either in the Department or in the proposed headquarters team, should be temporary because the continuation of the current practice would compromise the credibility of the Secretariat, which should be efficient and impartial.

51. Lastly, although peacekeeping operations contributed to international peace and security, more attention must be paid to the root causes of conflicts. Lasting peace could not prevail unless the imperatives of socio-economic development were adequately addressed. The concepts of peace and development were mutually complementary and deserved equal consideration.

52. Mr. OWADA (Japan) said that, although the international situation had changed dramatically since the Organization's establishment, the United Nations continued to play a central role in the maintenance of international peace and security, as prescribed by the Charter. The United Nations was still the only universal organization endowed with the function of coping with destabilizing regional situations and preventing them from spreading to the rest of the world. Currently, the most important means of exercising that function was the implementation of peacekeeping operations, which had begun over 40 years earlier and undoubtedly would continue well into the future. However, the modalities of those operations had changed over time, although their basic purpose remained the same. Traditionally, they had focused primarily on intervening between the parties in conflict to prevent the recurrence of hostilities. Recently, however, they had come to be regarded as an essential part of the global peace process and had been entrusted with tasks such as election monitoring, human rights monitoring, repatriation of refugees, national reconstruction and rehabilitation and even the protection of personnel engaged in humanitarian relief operations. In the light of the changing world situation and of the precious experience gained in operations such as those carried out in Somalia and the former Yugoslavia, it would be useful to reconsider the modalities of peacekeeping operations, as reflected in their mandates, to ensure that they responded to evolving realities.

53. In view of the importance of ongoing operations, Japan was concerned about the tendency to reduce their number and scope. While that trend reflected both constraints within the United Nations and external conditions, Member States

would make a grave error if they ignored situations of tension which could deteriorate in the absence of a peacekeeping operation. It would be unfortunate if financial constraints caused the United Nations to adopt a hesitant attitude towards the establishment of viable peacekeeping operations.

54. The participation of various countries in training activities and seminars related to peacekeeping operations facilitated an exchange of views that contributed to better mutual understanding and confidence-building. His country promoted such exchanges and participated actively in symposia and seminars held for that purpose.

55. Plans for the establishment of a rapidly deployable operational headquarters team had reached their final stage in 1995. His country supported an improvement in the Organization's rapid-reaction capabilities in relation to peacekeeping and was prepared to extend cooperation for the further development of that concept. Moreover, the viability of the operations depended, first and foremost, on the establishment of a firm financial base. Taking into account the financial situation of the United Nations and the need to maintain a wide geographical distribution of offices, the rapidly deployable headquarters team should have an appropriate combination of personnel, including officers from developing countries whose expenses would be paid from a trust fund, on-loan officers and Secretariat staff.

56. Secondly, there was a need to review past efforts in order to render future operations more effective. The Training Unit and the Lessons Learned Unit were to be commended for their activities; they deserved greater support from Member States. Thirdly, it was of crucial importance to establish a mechanism for consultations and exchanges of information between the Security Council and troop-contributing countries. He therefore welcomed the procedures set out in the statement of 28 March 1996 by the President of the Security Council (S/PRST/1996/13).

57. His Government expressed appreciation to Canada for submitting a streamlined draft resolution on the agenda item (A/C.4/51/L.9), the most important element of which was the proposal to expand the membership of the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations, beginning with the 1997 session. That would enable additional interested countries to participate in the Committee's discussions without impairing its efficiency.

58. With regard to the second draft resolution (A/C.4/51/L.10), on the safety of peacekeeping personnel, which his country had co-sponsored, the cooperation of Member States was essential for the early entry into force of the 1994 Convention on the Safety of United Nations and Associated Personnel. Unless the safety of personnel engaged in peacekeeping activities was ensured, States would be reluctant to send their nationals on such missions. It was vital that the Convention should specifically protect the personnel involved in humanitarian relief operations carried out under dangerous conditions.

59. Four years earlier, his country had adopted an International Peace Cooperation Act. Since then, it had contributed troops to peacekeeping operations in Cambodia, Mozambique and the Golan Heights and to humanitarian relief operations in Zaire. On the basis of the lessons learned so far, his Government was currently reviewing the Act, in order to determine how Japan

could play a more active role in United Nations activities for the maintenance of international peace and security. He reaffirmed his Government's determination to do everything in its power to cooperate with the United Nations in that worthy endeavour.

60. Mr. WINN (Myanmar) said that in recent years the United Nations had played an increasing role in the negotiation and implementation of complex agreements aimed at resolving long-festering conflicts. While it was essential to maintain international peace and security, peacekeeping operations should not be regarded as a substitute for the peaceful settlement of disputes. The use of armed forces or other collective measures for dealing with threats to the peace should be undertaken only as a last resort.

61. While it was neither desirable nor feasible to adopt inflexible procedures for all peacekeeping operations, such operations must be guided strictly by the principles and purposes of the Charter of the United Nations, in particular, respect for the sovereignty, territorial integrity and political independence of States and non-interference in their internal affairs. In addition, as the Secretary-General had noted, such operations should uphold the principles of impartiality, consent of the parties and non-use of force, except in self-defence.

62. In the post-cold-war years, the number of peacekeeping operations had increased substantially; in recent years, however, many operations had been terminated or reduced. Some had been successful, while others had failed to live up to expectations, but in either case, the lessons learned could improve current and future operations. In order to improve the effectiveness of peacekeeping operations, it was necessary to define their mandates clearly, set feasible and precise objectives and ensure the availability of sufficient resources for their implementation. It was also important for consultations to take place between troop-contributing countries and other interested States and the Security Council. He therefore welcomed the new consultation procedures announced recently by the President of the Council, which would enhance the transparency and coordination of the operations.

63. Adequate financial resources and support were essential to the effectiveness of peacekeeping operations. He was therefore deeply concerned at the financial situation of the United Nations and the failure of some Member States to pay their assessed contributions in full, on time and without conditions, in accordance with Article 17 of the Charter. The financing of peacekeeping operations was the collective responsibility of all Member States. His country had always fulfilled its obligations to pay its assessed contributions for peacekeeping operations, and had participated in such operations since 1958, when it had contributed military personnel to the United Nations Emergency Force (UNEF). Recently, his Government had responded to the Secretary-General's request for contributions of personnel and equipment to the standby forces arrangement. He also supported the Special Committee's recommendation for an increase in its membership through the addition of troop-contributing countries.

64. Lastly, peace and development went hand in hand. While it was important to ensure the success of peacekeeping operations, the need for economic and social development should not be ignored. Poverty and underdevelopment were the root

causes of conflicts that made peacekeeping operations necessary; hence, such operations should not be financed at the expense of development activities. He supported peacekeeping operations undertaken in accordance with the principles and purposes of the Charter, and hoped that the commendable work of the Department and the Special Committee would lead to enhancing the effectiveness of such operations.

65. Mr. DOS SANTOS (Mozambique) said that, while peacekeeping operations should operate on the basis of consent by the parties concerned, a balance must be struck between the need to respect national sovereignty and the need to safeguard human life in conflict situations. That conclusion underscored the importance of the work of the Special Committee. He therefore welcomed the proposal to enlarge the Special Committee, which would enhance its efficiency in considering issues pertaining to the basic philosophy of peacekeeping operations, and would encourage Member States to strengthen the Organization's role in addressing conflict situations around the world.

66. It was also necessary to ensure sufficient funding for peacekeeping operations in the future. Accordingly, it was very important for each country to pay its assessed contributions in full and on time. That would underscore the political will of Member States to live up to their obligations in a world characterized by the emergence of new and unpredictable situations.

67. Due attention should be given to peace-building mechanisms. The experience of Mozambique demonstrated that a country which was receiving United Nations assistance in the field of peacekeeping should also be provided with the necessary help to consolidate peace and stability once the conflict had been resolved. In that context, effective demobilization of combatants and their integration into society, weapons collection and mine clearance were of paramount importance. In addition, institutions must be strengthened in order to ensure lasting peace and stability and the exercise of democracy.

68. It was also important to address the humanitarian aspects, creating the necessary conditions to facilitate the repatriation and resettlement of refugees and internally displaced persons; that was the best way to prevent the emergence of new conflicts which would ultimately require new peacekeeping operations. The programme to repatriate and resettle about 1,700,000 Mozambicans, completed in June 1996, had been one of the largest and most successful operations ever undertaken by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. During its implementation, Mozambique had acquired considerable experience and developed capabilities which could be useful for peacekeeping operations worldwide. Mozambican personnel were ready to cooperate when necessary.

69. Although the Department of Peacekeeping Operations had established a number of bodies to increase its effectiveness, acquired considerable experience in that area and carried out many studies, Mozambique was concerned to see that the Organization remained slow to respond to conflict situations and that it repeated errors which had been committed in past operations. Cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations must be improved. In Africa the recurrence of long-drawn-out conflicts remained a challenge to the work of the international community as a whole and to efforts within the framework of the recently created OAU Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management and Resolution. Cooperation between the United Nations and the OAU

should be increased to enable African countries to take a more active role in searching for solutions to conflicts on that continent.

70. Mr. DOMINGO (Philippines) associated his delegation with the statement made by the representative of Thailand on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries. He fully agreed that peacekeeping operations played a vital role in preserving world peace and security, but they should be used only as a last resort and not as a first option. A renewed commitment by the United Nations to progress and development would be the best safeguard against conflicts.

71. His delegation welcomed the Special Committee's recommendation that its membership should be expanded, thereby enabling greater numbers of Member States to participate. The Philippines looked forward, as did other members of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, to making a more meaningful contribution to the Special Committee's work and to participating as a member in its decision-making. He therefore called on the Fourth Committee to adopt the draft resolution on the item under consideration by consensus.

72. His delegation placed the highest priority on the safety and security of all men and women serving with the United Nations, particularly those exposed to the hazards of peacekeeping operations. His delegation therefore joined others in calling for the ratification of the Convention on the Safety of United Nations and Associated Personnel.

73. He fully supported the position stated by the spokesman for the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries concerning the need to ensure greater transparency in respect of the rapid deployment force and to clarify the relationship between the rapidly deployable mission headquarters and the Department of Peacekeeping Operations. All Member States had a stake in the success of such operations. The key posts in the Department were manned by officers who were on loan to the Organization, and although their professional and technical competence was not in question, the fact that they greatly outnumbered United Nations staff was a sad commentary on the present state of affairs; it should be rectified on the basis of the relevant provisions of the Charter.

74. His delegation called on all countries, particularly those which were financially capable of doing so, to honour their basic commitments to the United Nations by paying their contributions in full and on time. The current reliance on intermediate solutions, such as loaned personnel and trust funds, must not become established practice or be accepted as an answer to the Organization's financial difficulties. Finally, an appropriate balance must be maintained between peacekeeping activities and those devoted to development. The success of the United Nations as a whole depended on it.

75. Mr. SAI (Algeria) expressed his delegation's full support for the statement made by the representative of Thailand on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries. The United Nations currently had 17 peacekeeping operations throughout the world and the Security Council had just approved a new operation for the Great Lakes region of Africa. That demonstrated the commitment of the Organization to maintaining peace and security for the benefit of humanity, and the worldwide scope of its activities. Without claiming to be the sole body responsible for dealing with situations of tension and conflict, the United Nations was currently involved, of its own will, in a number of endeavours to

resolve conflicts between or within States. That function of the United Nations reflected the clear intentions of its Member States expressed through a number of organs, mainly the Security Council, the General Assembly and its subsidiary organs, as well as the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations. Nonetheless, it had to be recognized that those bodies did not always fully reflect the concerns of all, especially when it came to formulating mandates, conducting peacekeeping operations and evaluating their results. Although the Organization acted on behalf of the entire international community, the real decision-making power continued to be the privilege of a limited number of countries whose motivations did not always reflect the collective will of Member States. Most States had few opportunities to make themselves heard. The Special Committee was practically the only forum where States could make themselves heard; even there they could only express their opinions, whereas in reality what was needed was for all interested countries to take an effective part in all aspects of the management of peacekeeping operations.

76. Algeria was one of the numerous countries which had requested, at the meeting of the Security Council held on 20 October 1995, that the right of all States to be fully informed regarding any decision to initiate or extend a peacekeeping operation should be effectively recognized. The Council's response, set out in a statement by its President on 28 March 1996, was a step forward, although it did not fully meet the wishes and aspirations expressed in debates.

77. In the context of peacekeeping operations, his delegation emphasized the need for the Organization to react quickly to situations requiring the initiation of such operations, in order to avert massacres such as those which had taken place in Africa. There was also an urgent need to resolve the Organization's financial crisis, which was due mainly to the fact that some countries had failed to fulfil their financial obligations to the United Nations. Reference should be made especially to the permanent members of the Security Council, who had a particular responsibility in that respect. Finally, the United Nations must duly reimburse troop-contributing countries, particularly those with limited resources, for expanses incurred in connection with the participation of their troops in peacekeeping operations. In that context, establishment of a uniform system of death or disability compensation for peacekeeping operations personnel would restore the principle of equity and equality of all those who worked in the service of the United Nations.

78. Algeria supported the peacekeeping activities of the United Nations by paying its contributions on time and contributing troops for peacekeeping operations, including those of Cambodia, Angola and Haiti. Algeria had also provided material and logistical support to the United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara, thereby demonstrating its sincere desire to cooperate with the international community in the establishment of lasting peace and security in the regional and international spheres. That had been and would remain his country's policy.

79. Mr. TASOVSKI (The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia) supported the proposals, recommendations and conclusions of the Special Committee contained in part III of its report (A/51/130). In view of the serious ongoing conflicts and the various situations that might result in conflicts in different parts of the world, it was important to define clear and realistic objectives for

peacekeeping operations and to ensure sufficient resources for the implementation of their mandates.

80. Given the complexity of peacekeeping operations, he welcomed the new process for consultations between troop-contributing countries, the Security Council and the Secretariat as set out in the statement made by the President of the Security Council on 28 March 1996. He was also of the view that the safety of peacekeeping forces was of paramount importance and therefore strongly supported the International Convention on the Safety of United Nations and Associated Personnel.

81. His delegation concurred with the Special Committee's position that peacekeeping operations should strictly observe the principles enshrined in the Charter concerning respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of States and non-intervention in their domestic affairs. It was therefore very important that peacekeeping operations should be provided with clearly defined mandates, command structures and secure financing. It should be noted, however, that the least-developed countries had a limited capacity to contribute.

82. The United Nations Preventive Deployment Force (UNPREDEP) played a vital role in support of the peace process in the Balkans region. Bearing in mind that the security situation in the region following the signing of the Dayton Peace Accords remained fragile, and that peace and stability in his country depended to a large extent on the situation in the region, his Government had requested the extension of the mandate of UNPREDEP for another six months, beginning on 30 November 1996.

83. Mr. NEGA (Ethiopia) endorsed the statement made by the representative of Thailand on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries. Since the end of the cold war, peace, the rule of law and good governance had been consolidated in many countries. However, in some regions, internal conflicts had resulted in the loss of countless lives, destruction of property, displacement of thousands of refugees and the collapse of social structures. For that reason, the international community, particularly the African countries, must do everything within their power to prevent the recurrence of conflicts. A comprehensive conflict management strategy was needed that would address the underlying causes of conflicts, determine the nature of each dispute and not only terminate ongoing disputes but also prevent their recurrence. In that regard, the consequences of economic dislocation must be borne in mind, especially in Africa, where the deteriorating economic situation had led to civil strife and conflicts; economic development must be revitalized in conflict-prone areas. In order for international and regional peacekeeping and peacemaking efforts to be effective, the causes of each conflict and the needs and aspirations of the parties must first be understood. In that context, consideration should be given to local initiatives that could offer innovative ways to resolve conflicts based on traditional values.

84. Having itself gone through a long period of internal conflicts, Ethiopia fully recognized the value of peace and the need to resolve conflicts through peaceful means. It had actively participated in the quest for peaceful and lasting solutions to conflicts and in the efforts to create new institutions and mechanisms that would facilitate the resolution of conflicts in the Africa region. It had actively participated in the establishment of the Central Organ

of the OAU Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management and Resolution and would continue to cooperate with OAU in that area.

85. The report of the Special Committee on Peacekeeping operations contained important proposals and recommendations. In that regard, his delegation subscribed to the principle that every effort should be made to resolve conflicts by peaceful means before resorting to other measures, including enforcement measures, and wished to stress that peacekeeping operations should be conducted on the basis of the full consent and cooperation of the parties to the conflict, complete impartiality, and non-use of force except in self-defence.

86. In view of the commendable work done by the Lessons Learned Unit of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, his delegation endorsed the Special Committee's recommendation that regular and adequate financing should be made available to that Unit. Its studies and findings would enable Member States to better understand the impact of peacekeeping operations and the capability of the United Nations in that regard, and would help to identify the shortcomings that had prevented specific missions from achieving complete success. In that context, he noted the seminar organized by the Secretariat to review the results of the United Nations Assistance Mission for Rwanda (UNAMIR). The important recommendations that had been adopted by the seminar included the need to closely monitor crisis situations before they escalated into violent conflicts and the need to expedite the deployment of peacekeeping operations once they were authorized by the Security Council. The seminar had also stressed the need to inform the local population in a timely manner about the main objectives of each mission.

87. The Rwandan experience showed that delay in sending and equipping a peacekeeping mission prolonged the suffering of millions of people who put their trust in the international community. It was therefore surprising that, in the face of human tragedy that was unfolding in the Great Lakes region, the competent international machinery had not reacted with the requisite alacrity in order to deploy in the area a peacekeeping force that would prevent an escalation of the crisis.

88. While the primary responsibility for the maintenance of peace and security lay with the United Nations, regional organizations could also make a valuable contribution to facilitating the peaceful resolution of conflicts. However, regional initiatives, especially in developing countries, had so far been constrained by logistical and financial difficulties. In that context, he drew attention to the Special Committee's recommendation on the importance of cooperation between the United Nations and the Organization of African Unity in the field of peacekeeping. His delegation urged the international community to support the political commitment of African countries by providing logistical, financial and technical support to the Central Organ of the OAU Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management and Resolution.

89. Mr. TAPIA (Chile) said that the growing importance of peacekeeping operations in the work of the United Nations during the past few years had both advantages and disadvantages. On the one hand, the increase in the number of such operations meant that new armed conflicts had arisen which had affected thousands of people. The international community, acting through the United

Nations, had been compelled to assign valuable and substantial resources to peacekeeping instead of using them for productive activities that facilitated development and progress, especially in those countries most affected by poverty. On the other hand, it was encouraging that the international community had been able to organize and implement such peacekeeping operations. In that connection, his delegation shared the view of other Member States that peacekeeping operations were not a solution in themselves, but an instrument which, together with humanitarian activities, would help to create the conditions of stability that were needed to find a political solution to conflicts. Member States were therefore responsible for ensuring that peacekeeping operations were carried out with maximum efficiency and that they fulfilled their important humanitarian and political mission as inexpensively and swiftly as possible.

90. His delegation acknowledged the significant efforts made by the Department of Peacekeeping Operations to streamline its functions and improve the efficiency of its operations. One of the improvements made during 1996 was the establishment of a consultative process between the Security Council and troop-contributing countries. Nonetheless, those countries' right to be heard by the Security Council should be recognized de jure, and not de facto as was currently the case.

91. Expanding the Special Committee's membership would ensure greater transparency in its work, which would suit the interests of most countries. His Government welcomed the positive work undertaken by the Secretariat regarding the establishment of a rapidly deployable operational headquarters, which would ensure a timely presence in the field in the context of peacekeeping operations, thereby preventing casualties to the extent possible. He was grateful for the exhaustive information supplied by Under-Secretary-General Kofi Annan and the Department. His delegation reiterated that the composition of the headquarters should comply with the principle of equitable geographical distribution. Moreover, the headquarters should be wholly funded, as soon as possible, from the regular budget of the United Nations.

92. Another issue which the Special Committee should examine was that of the necessary coordination of field activities with the work of humanitarian assistance organizations, both within the United Nations system and at the level of non-governmental organizations; the important role played by such organizations, as demonstrated recently in Zaire, should not be overlooked. Problems relating to the financing of peacekeeping operations and reimbursement of costs would be resolved as soon as all Member States, and especially the major contributors, paid their assessed contributions.

93. Finally, his delegation wished to pay tribute to the men and women who had given their lives for the ideals of peace. His Government reiterated its commitment to work with the United Nations in matters relating to the maintenance of international peace and security in the hope that some day all the Organization's human and financial resources could be devoted to encouraging social development and improving the living conditions of people everywhere.

94. Mr. ZIMMERMAN (International Committee of the Red Cross) said that in its statements to the Committee over the past few years, the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) had expressed its concerns regarding the applicability

of international humanitarian law to peacekeeping or peace-enforcement forces. The changing nature of peacekeeping had heightened the need for clarification in that regard. In 1995, the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations had requested the Secretary-General "to complete the elaboration of a code of conduct for United Nations peacekeeping personnel, consistent with applicable international humanitarian law" (A/50/230, para. 73).

95. In conformity with its mandate to work for the understanding and dissemination of international humanitarian law applicable in armed conflicts, ICRC had studied the possible content of such a code of conduct. To that end, it had organized meetings of experts which former commanders of United Nations forces and representatives of the Secretariat had attended; participants had analysed all the provisions of international humanitarian law in order to determine their applicability to peacekeeping operations. The experts had elaborated a draft code of conduct which had subsequently been reviewed jointly by ICRC, the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and the Office of Legal Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat. A final text, entitled "Directives for UN Forces Regarding Respect for International Humanitarian Law", had been drawn up in May 1996. The document set out the content and scope of the principles and spirit of international humanitarian law referred to in many status-of-forces agreements. The Office of Legal Affairs was currently engaged in a last round of consultations with troop-contributing countries and it was hoped that the important text would be finalized before the end of the year.

96. The Directives were designed for United Nations forces when, in a situation of armed conflict, they were actively engaged as combatants as part of a peacekeeping or peace-enforcement operation where the use of force had been authorized either in self-defence or in pursuance of a specific mandate from the Security Council. Since the Directives did not constitute an exhaustive list of the principles and rules of humanitarian law binding upon military personnel, rules of engagement or other relevant directives adapted to particular circumstances should continue to be issued. In addition, blue helmets continued to be bound by their own national legislation to respect international humanitarian law, and any violation could give rise to prosecution in their national courts.

97. Training military personnel in international humanitarian law had preventive value and offered operational advantages. United Nations troops should be exemplary in that regard. Training was the best guarantee that operations would be conducted in compliance with the law, and that United Nations contingents would be in a position to ensure that the warring parties complied with the law. Every national contingent should receive proper training before being deployed, and the above-mentioned Directives would provide an appropriate conceptual framework for such training.

98. ICRC had repeatedly called for the establishment of humanitarian spaces in situations of conflict, because the neutrality and impartiality of humanitarian work was undermined whenever no clear and common understanding existed with respect to the nature of humanitarian operations. Any such understanding should be based on clear concepts laid out in the mandates entrusted to the peacekeeping forces by the Security Council. The sole purpose of humanitarian action was to ensure that the victims were assisted and protected. That was why ICRC deemed it vital that political or military action, including any action

undertaken under the auspices of the United Nations, should be conceived in such a way as not to erode the neutrality and impartiality of humanitarian operations.

99. Within those parameters, and while maintaining a total independence of decision and action, ICRC personnel frequently talked with peacekeeping forces in order to clarify their respective tasks, especially in cases where the forces' mission was to facilitate or ensure the delivery of humanitarian assistance or, more generally, where humanitarian issues were at stake. Cooperation and complementarity were more difficult to achieve, or were not even sought, when enforcement measures were adopted, because the nature of the relationship between ICRC and peace-enforcement troops might change, and ICRC might be called upon to fulfil its role as a neutral intermediary, for example by visiting persons detained by a United Nations force.

100. Finally, it was important to bear in mind that although humanitarian action could run parallel to military or political action, it could not replace it. Politicization of humanitarian action was detrimental to the victims of armed conflicts. Equally risky were attempts to put a humanitarian label on action of a political or military nature. ICRC and the United Nations should continue their constructive dialogue and continue to cooperate in the fulfilment of their respective mandate in the best interests of the victims of conflicts.

The meeting rose at 6 p.m.

UNITED NATIONS

General Assembly

FIFTY-FIRST SESSION

Official Records

SPECIAL POLITICAL COMMITTEE
(FOURTH COMMITTEE)
17th meeting
held on
Tuesday 19 November 1996
at 10 a.m.
New York

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 17th MEETING

Chairman: Mr. KITTIKHOUN (Lao People's Democratic Republic)

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AGENDA ITEM 86: COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW OF THE WHOLE QUESTION OF PEACEKEEPING OPERATIONS IN ALL THEIR ASPECTS (continued)

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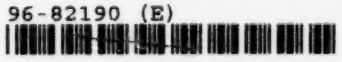

The meeting was called to order at 10 a.m.

AGENDA ITEM 86: COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW OF THE WHOLE QUESTION OF PEACEKEEPING OPERATIONS IN ALL THEIR ASPECTS (continued) (A/51/198-S/1996/270, A/51/130, A/C.4/51/L.9 and L.10)

1. Mr. FEDOTOV (Russian Federation) said that the 1990s had witnessed a new stage in the evolution of United Nations activities for the maintenance of international peace and security. Peacekeeping operations carried out under the auspices of the United Nations were becoming qualitatively more complex. The number of peacekeeping operations with "classic" parameters had been steadily decreasing. The proportion of multifunction operations performing complex tasks in the context of ongoing conflicts was rising. Both the capabilities of the United Nations, and its limitations, had become clearer. There was an urgent need to improve the efficiency of the peacekeeping arsenal. At the same time, the development of theory and practice should not erode the pivotal principles of United Nations peacekeeping activities. Effective peacekeeping was inconceivable without a close link between the deployment of "Blue Helmets" and political efforts to settle conflicts. Peacekeeping operations were not an end in themselves, but one of the most important instruments for reaching a comprehensive political settlement.

2. There was increasing recognition of the crucial importance of preventive activities, which were in fact the most rapid response. A clearer distinction must be drawn between peacekeeping operations and enforcement operations. Enforcement operations must be confined within strict limits and could be carried out only on the decision of the Security Council and under its political and, if necessary, operational control. The use of force within the context of "non-enforcement" peacekeeping operations, primarily to ensure the safety of United Nations personnel, also required an extremely responsible approach. Appropriate parameters and procedures must be clearly defined in the mandates of operations. The issue of coalition operations had become particularly topical recently. Such innovations in the practice of peacekeeping operations must be fully adapted to the purposes and principles laid down in the Charter of the United Nations. Any enforcement operation by a third party or a multinational coalition could be conducted only with the authorization of the Security Council, and transparency and the accountability of coalition actions to the United Nations must be ensured.

3. Further improvement of the cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations in accordance with Chapter VIII of the Charter of the United Nations was of particular significance. The Russian Federation attached particular importance to the development of cooperation in the sphere of peacekeeping between the United Nations and the Commonwealth of Independent States. Through its consistent actions in a number of conflict zones in countries of the Commonwealth of Independent States, the Russian Federation, along with other Commonwealth member States, was making a concrete contribution to global efforts to maintain international peace and security. In the Commonwealth of Independent States peacekeeping was being carried out in full compliance with the Charter of the United Nations and with the consent of the parties concerned. That was demonstrated by the activities of the United Nations observer missions in Georgia and Tajikistan and the close cooperation

with them of peacekeepers from the Russian Federation and the Commonwealth of Independent States.

4. In the face of new threats to peace and stability, the rapid response capability of the United Nations must be enhanced. His delegation supported the efforts of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations to enhance the efficiency of the deployment of peacekeeping operations and expand their resource base. The system of standby arrangements was the most effective way of achieving that goal. The Russian Federation had made concrete proposals regarding its practical contribution to that system to the United Nations Secretariat. The establishment of a rapidly deployable mission headquarters for the initial stage of the establishment of peacekeeping operations was a useful initiative. It was important to ensure fair and equitable principles of staffing of the team, transparency in its activities, the timely provision of information to the Security Council on progress in the deployment of operations, and monitoring of that process by the Security Council. The concept of preventive deployment needed to be further explored and improved in practice. The success criteria, the exit strategy, and the principles for the timely reconfiguration of an operation depending on changes in the situation on the ground must be agreed upon in advance.

5. Operations with substantial humanitarian objectives were currently in the forefront. It was necessary to avoid an "interventionist reflex" by, inter alia, obtaining the consent of the Government of the receiving State, and where appropriate, the parties to a conflict. The possibility should be borne in mind of involving other international and non-governmental organizations in the humanitarian component of United Nations peacekeeping operations, including the provision by them, at their own expense, of personnel and other resources, under the coordinating role of the United Nations.

6. The Russian Federation took a positive view of the steps which had been taken recently to improve the mechanism of consultations between the Security Council and troop-contributing States. It believed that the interests of troop-contributing States should be duly taken into account by the Security Council when establishing new operations or extending the mandates of operations already deployed. The Russian Federation was the second largest contributor to United Nations peacekeeping operations. In addition, Russian peacekeepers were serving in the Collective Peacekeeping Forces of the Commonwealth of Independent States in Georgia and Tajikistan and in the Implementation Force in Bosnia. That participation stemmed from the Russian Federation's understanding of the significance of peacekeeping as an important instrument for resolving global and regional crises.

7. The Russian Federation was in favour of establishing a solid financial base for United Nations peacekeeping operations. It was no secret that the shortfall of resources often made it difficult to implement the mandates of peacekeeping operations. Timely reimbursement of contributions and a more equitable apportionment of the costs of peacekeeping operations among Member States while preserving the special financial responsibility of the Permanent Member Security Council must be ensured. It was also important to try to diversify the sources of financing for peacekeeping operations, particularly by expanding the financial and material participation of the receiving States and the States involved. The Russian Federation, for its part, was doing everything possible

to pay off its arrears: in 1996 the Russian Federation's payments for peacekeeping operations had exceeded its assessed contributions by nearly US$ 100 million, and over the next few days it would make another large payment of over US$ 41 million, after which the total payments by the Russian Federation to the peacekeeping budget would amount to US$ 205.7 million.

8. The draft resolution on peacekeeping operations drawn up by the working group was a well-balanced and well-drafted document; his delegation hoped that it would be adopted by consensus.

9. Ms. AL-SALEM (Kuwait) said that the question of peacekeeping operations was a very important item on the agenda of the General Assembly because it was closely linked with stability, peace and security in the world, in which, after the end of the "cold war", conflicts were taking place on racial and ethnic grounds. The international community needed to unite its efforts to overcome the obstacles which had arisen and seek the best ways of strengthening the potential of the United Nations in the area of peacekeeping operations. In that connection it was important to define precise and practical objectives for peacekeeping operations and ensure adequate financing for them. It was also necessary to strengthen the potential of the United Nations in the area of preventive diplomacy and rapid deployment in the event of the outbreak of conflicts and to ensure that peacekeeping became peacebuilding and that the United Nations did not have to resort to a military solution of problems.

10. Her delegation supported the proposal to establish a multinational high-readiness brigade to respond to threats to peace and security. It was time to consider that question in detail and create such a mechanism. Kuwait believed that consultations between troop-contributing countries and the Security Council should be expanded and should be systematic in nature so that sending States could be kept informed about political events and the security situation in regions.

11. The United Nations Iraq-Kuwait Observation Mission was monitoring the situation along the border between Iraq and Kuwait. Kuwait was providing all possible assistance and support to the Mission since it believed that the Mission was playing a vitally important role in the maintenance of peace and security in the border region between Kuwait and Iraq and in the Persian Gulf as a whole. In view of the financial difficulties of the United Nations, her Government had decided in November 1996 to assume responsibility for the financing of two thirds of the Mission's budget. For three consecutive years Kuwait had paid its contributions on time and in full for the upkeep of the Mission and other peacekeeping missions. Her delegation expressed appreciation to the commander and the members of the Mission, and also to the countries whose troops were in Kuwait, and undertook to cooperate with them in resolving all problems. Her delegation supported all the recommendations contained in the report and in the draft resolution.

12. Mr. AMORIM (Brazil) expressed appreciation to the Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, the Permanent Representative of Nigeria and the Chairman of the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations, and thanked the delegation of Canada for conducting the deliberations of the open-ended working group of the Special Committee and the negotiations on one of the draft resolutions. Although the number of United Nations peacekeepers had sharply

declined in recent months, from 67,269 in July 1995 to 25,296, it should be borne in mind that the complexity of the tasks assigned to peacekeeping operations had not diminished and required a constant strengthening of the capacity of the United Nations in that area.

13. The level of outstanding contributions to the financing of peacekeeping operations had negatively affected the troop-contributing countries, which had not been reimbursed by the Organization in a timely manner. As a consequence of the lack of funds, the Department had continued to resort to the practice of using military officers on loan. Although that practice had been introduced as a temporary solution, it was not likely to be discontinued in the near future. As was indicated in the report of the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations (A/51/130), there was a need to ensure that the recruitment and use of loaned personnel was consistent with the requirements of Articles 100 and 101 of the Charter, including that due regard be paid to wide geographical representation.

14. Brazil believed that the success of peacekeeping operations depended on respect for certain basic principles, above all the consent of all relevant parties. Moreover, a peacekeeping operation must be impartial and must not include the use of force, other than in exceptional circumstances for the purposes of self-defense. Peacekeeping operations should be an instrument to assist peacemaking efforts on the ground and should not be seen as an end in themselves. After the end of the "cold war", a number of peacekeeping operations had bordered on or trespassed into enforcement action, with unsatisfactory results. That only weakened the Organization's credibility as a broker for peace. It was necessary to establish clear guidelines for peacekeeping, taking into account the need to preserve the essential philosophy of the Charter regarding the distinction between the peaceful settlement of disputes and coercive collective action.

15. His delegation welcomed the idea of establishing a rapid deployment headquarters and felt that its staffing should be ensured on a broader geographical basis. Consultations and the exchange of information with troop-contributing countries on the basis of the guidelines set forth in the relevant Presidential statements played an important role in the conduct of peacekeeping operations. The enhancement of communication and transparency between the relevant parties concerned in peacekeeping operations was not only in line with the aspirations of most Member States but was also conducive to an improved peacekeeping performance. Brazil welcomed the expansion of the membership of the Special Committee, which would make possible a more constructive discussion of United Nations peacekeeping operations.

16. Mr. KARSGAARD (Canada) said that some progress had been made in the areas of consultations with troop-contributing countries, planning, lessons learned, civilian police and training. Canada was particularly encouraged by the efforts of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations to develop the standby arrangements system, and also to elaborate plans for the establishment of a rapidly-deployable mission headquarters. That would make it possible to deploy peacekeeping forces from headquarters more rapidly once the Security Council had adopted a corresponding decision. In such circumstances saving time on deployment could save lives.

17. In spite of those improvements, however, the Department still did not have the capabilities and resources necessary for it to be the instrument of choice when the international community decided to address a particular crisis. Peacekeeping operations had become more complex in recent years and the Department had developed the necessary resources to manage those incremental complexities, particularly in so far as their civilian character was concerned. At the same time Member States had failed to provide the conceptual framework within which the Department could develop into a more flexible instrument that was able to respond rapidly to various situations. Currently a significant proportion of the Department's staff was composed of either civilians engaged on short-term contracts or military personnel provided on loan by Governments. That was a well-known problem which the Special Committee had considered at length in spring. Notwithstanding the excellent quality of the loaned officers and the dedication of the civilian employees, a major department could not be run in that way on a continuing basis. Member States must correct those imbalances and provide the necessary resources so that a greater percentage of the staff of the Department could be funded and recruited on a regular basis. That was the only way to ensure that the necessary corporate knowledge and expertise was maintained over the long term. The Special Committee noted in its report that adequate financial resources were crucial to the effectiveness of United Nations peacekeeping operations. Member States must meet their financial obligations and the Secretariat must develop a cost-effective and viable system for managing United Nations assets for the logistic support of peacekeeping operations.

18. Canada welcomed the agreement on revision of the membership structure reached by the Special Committee, which reflected the current realities of widespread participation in peacekeeping operations. In cooperation with other States, it was endeavouring to contribute to the development of new concepts for improving the capability of the United Nations to conduct peacekeeping missions.

19. Mr. AKAKPO (Togo) said that peacekeeping operations were very important for restraining the growth and escalation of military actions and seeking a peaceful settlement of conflicts. Positive results had been achieved in Cambodia, El Salvador and Mozambique. In other peacekeeping operations, however, the objectives had not been met. Togo believed that lessons must be learnt both from successes and from failures so as to improve the organization of future operations. Naturally it supported the Special Committee's recommendation that all necessary resources should be provided to training assistance teams.

20. Conflict prevention was equally important. Togo, despite its limited resources, was contributing to preventive diplomacy. The President of Togo, Mr. Eyadéma, was making great efforts in respect of conflict prevention and the peaceful settlement of disputes in the West African sub-region and in other parts of Africa. In that connection Togo believed that it was necessary to strengthen international cooperation, which would enable preventive diplomacy to fulfil its objectives.

21. In view of the growth in the number of United Nations peacekeeping missions, the question of adequate financing, which was necessary for the effective conduct of those operations, was of particular significance. Even though everyone understood the importance of that factor, the United Nations and the Department of Peacekeeping Operations did not have the resources even to

reimburse the expenses of troop-contributing countries. In those circumstances even developing countries were in a situation of subsidizing peacekeeping operations. Since peacekeeping was an obligation of all Member States, and in particular the Permanent Members of the Security Council, it was essential for Member States to make up their arrears in contributions without delay and without any conditions.

22. Another serious problem relating to peacekeeping operations was the security and safety of United Nations personnel. Everything possible must be done to punish those responsible for the deaths of peacekeepers and improve the security and safety of the "Blue Helmets" and the civilian personnel of missions. In that connection Togo welcomed the adoption in 1994 of the Convention on the Safety of United Nations and Associated Personnel.

23. Mr. DUMITRIU (Romania) said that despite the financial difficulties which affected them directly, peacekeeping operations continued to be an essential means of conflict management for the United Nations. The relative decline in the number of operations resulted not from a decrease in their importance but from the current inability of the United Nations to take adequate measures in all cases in the increasingly complex situations demanding action by the international community. If peacekeeping operations were to continue to serve as a useful instrument in the maintenance of international peace and security, clarity of mandates, political support and financial resources were needed. Romania considered that in order to conduct successful operations like those in Cambodia, El Salvador, Mozambique and Namibia, it was necessary to stop searching between the lines of the Charter for justification for non-action. Furthermore, the United Nations must try to avoid the risk of an excessive fragmentation of its thinking on peace operations as a whole. A rigid separation of the interconnected peacekeeping activities - preventive deployment, preventive diplomacy, peacemaking, peacekeeping operations, and post-conflict peace-building - was of questionable value.

24. His delegation wished to underline the value of many proposals and recommendations contained in the report of the Special Committee (A/51/130). Among them were the proposals and recommendations relating to a better use of preventive deployment, congruence between mandates, resources and objectives, full consideration and application of lessons learned, improved cooperation with some regional organizations, in particular the Organization of African Unity (OAU), and the creation of partnerships between Governments which required equipment and those willing to provide it. Those recommendations had been widely accepted and had a good chance of being implemented. In that connection, Romania welcomed the draft resolution before the Committee, in which the Special Committee was requested to review the implementation of its previous proposals and consider new proposals. One of the new proposals aimed at establishing a rapidly deployable mission headquarters. His delegation wished to reiterate its support for the efforts undertaken by the Secretariat and a number of Member States to make the team function as soon as possible.

25. Some of the other recommendations made in the report of the Special Committee appeared to have less chance of being implemented because of the lack of financial resources. His delegation shared the concern over delays in the reimbursement of troop-contributing countries, including reimbursement in respect of operations whose mandates had been completed. It also felt that

greater transparency was needed as to how the scarce funds available for peacekeeping operations were used.

26. Romania was continuing to provide not only political but also direct support to United Nations peacekeeping operations. To the extent of its possibilities, it was making a significant contribution to the maintenance of peace and to the alleviation of the consequences of conflicts. Romania had carefully considered the new concepts offered by Canada, Denmark, the Netherlands and other Member States. It welcomed the attempt to develop a new dimension of United Nations potential - a genuine and reliable rapid reaction capability. His delegation fully recognized the complexity of implementing the concept. At the same time it was impossible to ignore the loss of human life, which would be lessened if the United Nations could react promptly to crisis situations.

27. Mr. NGO QUANG XUAN (Viet Nam) said that in recent years peacekeeping operations had become one of the most significant activities of the United Nations. At the same time, peacekeeping operations had been moving beyond the confines of traditional concepts about them, taking on complex tasks in extremely difficult situations. Although Viet Nam recognized the importance of United Nations peacekeeping operations, it believed that they should never be regarded as a substitute for the political settlement of disputes and that they should be of a temporary nature. Viet Nam felt that peacekeeping operations must be carried out strictly in accordance with the purposes and principles laid down in the Charter of the United Nations and must be guided by the principles of respect for national sovereignty, territorial integrity and non-interference in the internal affairs of States. Viet Nam also felt that the basic principles of peacekeeping, namely the consent of the parties, impartiality and the non-use of force except in self-defense, were essential to the success of peacekeeping operations.

28. Viet Nam believed that the United Nations should learn lessons from the successes as well as the failures of peacekeeping operations in order to discharge the responsibilities entrusted to it by Member States more effectively. In that regard it welcomed the establishment of the Lessons Learned Unit within the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and called for the widest possible distribution among States Members of the Organization of the studies and research papers prepared by that Unit.

29. Viet Nam supported the conclusion made in the Special Committee's report that United Nations peacekeeping operations needed to be provided with clearly defined mandates, objectives, command structures, and secure financing. In order to ensure their effectiveness, they must have realistic mandates, including clear objectives and time frames for each operation. Additional efforts should be made to improve the planning, management and coordination of peacekeeping operations. In that regard Viet Nam welcomed the arrangements for consultation and exchange of information with troop-contributing countries.

30. The Special Committee was the only United Nations forum entrusted with responsibility for studying and analysing all aspects of peacekeeping operations as well as drawing lessons and setting principles and guidelines for improving peacekeeping operations. The drastic changes that peacekeeping had undergone recently should undoubtedly be reflected in the Special Committee in terms of a

review of its current structure. Since peacekeeping, in its political, financial and legal aspects, was a collective responsibility of all Member States, Viet Nam felt that the participation of a larger number of Member States in the Special Committee's work would make it more effective. Viet Nam was in favour of expanding the Special Committee and turning it into an open-ended body so that it would meet the needs of all Member States, in particular troop-contributing countries.

31. His delegation shared the view of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries that the primary cause of the financial difficulties of the United Nations was the failure on the part of certain developed countries to discharge in full and on time their obligation to pay their assessed contributions to the regular budget and the peacekeeping budget. In that regard Viet Nam reiterated the special responsibilities of the Permanent Members of the Security Council. Viet Nam also agreed with the position of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries that countries should pay their arrears as well as their current dues in full, on time, and without any conditions as proof of their political will to honour their obligations under the Charter of the United Nations. However, Viet Nam also wished to propose that developing countries should be able to pay their arrears within a certain period of time in cases in which there were circumstances which were beyond the control of their Governments. In that connection he announced that in 1996 Viet Nam had decided to fulfil its financial contribution to the peacekeeping budget and had committed itself to paying all its outstanding arrears within five years.

32. His delegation concurred with the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries that there was an increasing imbalance between the expenses of the large number of existing peacekeeping operations and the resources available for the development activities of the United Nations. Viet Nam believed that the funding of peacekeeping operations must not be at the expense of development activities.

33. Mr. MARTINI HERRERA (Guatemala), speaking on behalf of the Central American countries, said that those countries attached great importance to peacekeeping operations. The Central American countries wished to confirm some basic principles of peacekeeping operations. In their view, peacekeeping operations should strictly abide by the purposes and principles laid down in the Charter of the United Nations, particularly those relating to full respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of States and non-interference in the internal affairs of States. Peacekeeping operations must be carried out with the consent of the parties. With a view to the successful conduct of peacekeeping operations, it was necessary to draw on the experience acquired, but decisions relating to each operation must be based on an individual analysis of the situation in each specific case.

34. The Central American countries commended the initiatives aimed at enhancing the efficiency and strengthening the response capability of the United Nations in the context of peacekeeping operations. In that connection they supported the system of standby arrangements. In addition, they were following with interest the establishment of a rapidly deployable headquarters team in the Department of Peacekeeping Operations.

35. The Central American countries noted that the increase in the number of members of the Special Committee corresponded to the principle of universality -

one of the basic principles of the United Nations. Another important aspect was ensuring transparency when carrying out operations. In that regard the Central American countries noted with satisfaction the mechanism for conducting consultations between the troop-contributing countries, the Security Council and the Secretariat.

36. There was a need to review the rules relating to death and disability benefits in order to develop a uniform scale based on the principle of equality of all Member States. In addition, consideration should be given to the question of reducing the length of the period for consideration of claims for the reimbursement of Member States for their contributions of personnel and equipment to peacekeeping operations.

37. Mr. AL-KHAYARIN (Qatar) said that, while successful operations had been carried out in Cambodia, Namibia and Central America, new "generations" of conflicts associated with the growth of regional, political, separatist and ethnic tendencies had cropped up within States and in relations between them, and changes had occurred which had led to failures and delays in the conduct of peacekeeping operations, as in Somalia and the former Yugoslavia. Furthermore, the sharp rise in the number of peacekeeping operations had increased the financial burden. That had led to a review of the role of peacekeeping operations. A Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations had been established to carry out a comprehensive review of the whole question of peacekeeping operations. His delegation shared the view of the Special Committee that peacekeeping operations were one of the Organization's most important means of settling disputes and maintaining international peace and security. At the same time, they were not a means of preventing disputes but of halting the escalation of conflicts while ways of achieving a peaceful settlement were being explored. The Special Committee attached great importance to conflict prevention and the peaceful settlement of disputes by negotiation, arbitration, conciliation, judicial settlement or resort to regional arrangements. The Committee had developed a number of definitions and principles relating to the implementation of peacekeeping mandates. Of greatest importance were the formulation of precise objectives, ensuring sufficient financing and the need to differentiate between peacekeeping functions and enforcement tasks in the mandates of peacekeeping operations, and in the conduct of such operations, to observe the principles of impartiality, consent of the parties, non-interference in the internal affairs of States and non-use of force.

38. Special attention must be paid to the role of preventive diplomacy in conflict resolution. Such diplomacy required the adoption of confidence-building measures. His delegation reaffirmed the need to lay the foundations for confidence and preventive diplomacy with a view to establishing a just and lasting peace in the Middle East, the region in which the first United Nations peacekeeping operation had been carried out. There was a need to set in motion a peacekeeping mechanism, and his delegation shared the Secretary-General's view regarding the importance of preventive diplomacy in averting armed conflicts that might pose a threat to international peace and security. He supported the Special Committee's proposals and recommendations concerning ways of surmounting the current crisis in peacekeeping operations so that such operations could continue to serve as an effective means of maintaining international peace and security.

39. Mr. SHANMUGASUNDARAM (India) supported the statement made by the representative of Thailand on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries. India had participated in 26 peacekeeping operations and its troops, military observers and civilian police were currently serving in such operations in many parts of the world. More than 100 Indian peacekeepers had died in the service of the United Nations. The time had come to reflect on the lessons of past experience in order to build for the future. By their very nature, peacekeeping operations were interim measures which could only be of limited duration. Accordingly, there should be no hesitation in ending operations which had been overtaken by events or had become inconsistent with their mandates.

40. His delegation welcomed the proposal to the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations. Effective peacekeeping required that the inputs of troop-contributing countries should be factored into the determination of mandates, changes therein, the review of operational plans and the formulation of rules of engagement because all those areas affected not only the performance but also the lives of troops. The statement made by the President of the Security Council on 28 March 1996 (S/PRST/1996/13) had been a first step towards the greater involvement of troop-contributing countries in decision-making, which could evolve into an effective dialogue. India also hoped to participate constructively in the consideration of diverse aspects of peacekeeping, including operational mine clearance.

41. Currently, the number of military officers on loan to the Department of Peacekeeping Operations was more than five times higher than the number of officers whose posts were financed by the United Nations. While his delegation acknowledged the contribution that such personnel could make, it considered that their preponderance hindered the development of an independent international civil service with expertise in the peacekeeping area and adversely affected the process of institutionalization, which was essential to the completion of the Organization's long-term tasks. It was also a sign that the Organization was succumbing to pressure from those who took an "à la carte" approach to its activities. He therefore believed that the Secretary-General should, if necessary, propose additional posts for military officers, to be financed from the support account. Moreover, in the interests of equity, all Member States should accept the principle of equal rates of compensation for peacekeepers killed or disabled while serving under the United Nations flag.

42. Outstanding debts for major operations that had ended more than two years earlier should be settled, and his delegation urged the States in arrears to pay their outstanding contributions in full. It was to be hoped that the continued attention to peacekeeping activities would not overshadow the wider goals and objectives of the Charter of the United Nations. In the final analysis, durable peace could be based only on economic development and growth. Economic development was the best form of preventive diplomacy, and the Organization's efforts and resources should be directed towards that end.

43. Mr. HRBAČ (Slovakia) said that during its 50-year history, the United Nations had successfully completed a number of peacekeeping missions. On the other hand, there had been several cases where efforts by the Organization had failed. The Charter of the United Nations was designed to make it possible to take measures not only to remove threats to peace, but also to prevent them. It was necessary to set up an early-warning system capable of identifying potential

sources of conflict well in advance. Slovakia encouraged the Secretariat to enhance further the framework for coordination involving the three departments primarily concerned with the prevention, control and resolution of conflicts: the Department of Political Affairs, the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and the Department of Humanitarian Affairs.

44. There were various ways to prevent conflicts. The United Nations Preventive Deployment Force in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (UNPREDEP) was a positive example of a successful preventive mission. That mission could serve as a model to be followed and could be applied to some other potential conflict areas as well.

45. Most of today's conflicts were marked by the collapse of State institutions and a breakdown in law and order, resulting in humanitarian tragedy on a massive scale. A multidimensional approach, including measures to address the root causes of the conflict, were necessary for a peace mission to be successful. A clearly defined mandate for operations and a distinction between peace enforcement and peacemaking at the early stages of mission planning were vital for the success of a mission on the ground. Peacekeepers as well as civilian police should be geographically and culturally suited to the local population in conflict areas. In that regard, the role of the Department of Public Information was not only to inform, but also to explain the objectives of a peacekeeping mission primarily in a conflict area. Since the radio was one of the most cost-effective and far-reaching media available to the Department, his delegation supported the establishment of United Nations radio stations as an integral part of the overall mission.

46. The multidimensional approach should include post-conflict peace-building and confidence-building measures, irrespective of whether a conflict was ethnic or religious in origin or simply the result of a struggle for power. Slovakia supported the proposal by the Secretary-General that the chief mission should be given the capacity to provide some direct development assistance to those affected. The seven market days organized by the Transitional Administrator in Eastern Slavonia in October 1995, in which more than 45,000 Serbs and Croats had participated, thus contributing to a reduction of individual hostility and suspicion, was an example of confidence-building measures. The establishment of democratic structures, where regional organizations played a vital role, was another significant part of post-conflict peace-building.

47. Landmines not only posed a threat to civilians but were also a serious obstacle to economic and infrastructure recovery in the post-conflict period. It was necessary to differentiate between operational demining, aimed at the immediate objectives of a peacekeeping mission, and humanitarian demining, targeting long-term goals within the framework of post-conflict peace-building. Operational demining should, wherever appropriate, be an integral part of peacekeeping mandates. In that respect, his delegation was pleased to point out the significant contribution made by the Slovak engineering battalion to United Nations demining activities in the former Yugoslavia in the past several years. His country had already unilaterally declared a moratorium on the export of anti-personnel landmines.

48. Mr. SKRYPKO (Belarus) said that his country, in general, supported the proposals and recommendations on ways to improve the peacekeeping machinery of

the United Nations set forth in chapter III of the report of the Committee on Peacekeeping Operations (A/51/130). Operations should be conducted in strict accordance with such fundamental criteria for peacekeeping as the consent of the parties to the conflict to the deployment and conduct of missions; impartiality and the non-use of force, except for self-defence; and the principles of international law concerning sovereign equality and the territorial integrity of States, and non-interference in their internal affairs. In that context, the non-discriminatory and uniform application of peacekeeping principles and criteria was of paramount importance. At the same time, peacekeeping operations should be closely linked with efforts to resolve conflicts by political means. In that connection, he noted with satisfaction the establishment, within the Department of Humanitarian Affairs, of a humanitarian early-warning system database, which could be accessed by the Department of Peacekeeping Operations. Use of that information would make it possible to mobilize efforts by the international community to prevent dangerous conflicts at the earliest possible stages in their evolution. His delegation stressed the need to distinguish between traditional peacekeeping operations, carried out under Chapter VI of the Charter, and peace-enforcement operations, under Chapter VII. Such different and generally opposite methods could not constitute a continuous series of measures to resolve conflict situations.

49. Belarus supported the process of strengthening consultation arrangements and attached particular importance to the holding of consultations with prospective troop contributors in good time before initiating individual peacekeeping missions. It was also in favour of improving the mechanism for coordination and consultations between the United Nations and regional organizations on issues of early prevention and conflict settlement. His delegation supported the proposal to set up a rapidly deployable headquarters team, which would logically develop existing stand-by arrangements and enhance the Organization's ability to set up the backbone of field headquarters for new operations and, accordingly, missions themselves. The system of stand-by arrangements was the most acceptable and realistic form for his country's gradual involvement in peacekeeping activities. Consideration was currently being given to the possibility of training Belarusian nationals at international peacekeeping training centres and within the framework of the NATO Partnership for Peace programme for their subsequent participation in peacekeeping operations.

50. His delegation noted with satisfaction the decision by the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations to expand its membership, which would significantly increase the transparency of all the Organization's peacekeeping activities and meet current needs for the democratization of the composition and methods of work of its various bodies. Belarus was considering the possibility of participating in the Special Committee's activities as a full-fledged member at its next session. He positively assessed the activities of the Informed Open-ended Working Group on an Agenda for Peace and hoped that the Group would finalize in the near future its recommendations on strengthening the United Nations potential in the maintenance of international peace and security.

51. Mr. PERRILLA (Argentina) said that peacekeeping operations were one of the means by which the United Nations resolved situations that had a negative impact on stability, peace and security in the world. At the current time, Argentina was taking part in eight of the 17 United Nations peacekeeping operations. Its

unreimbursed expenditures in connection with those operations exceeded by several times the amount of Argentina's contributions for peacekeeping operations and the regular budget.

52. With regard to professional training, during the Pan-American Conference of Ministers of Defence in Bariloche from 7 to 9 October 1996, Argentina had proposed the establishment of a regional training centre, in whose activities all the countries of the continent could participate. The objective was to enhance, by means of professional training, the coordination and level of participation by countries of the Western Hemisphere in United Nations operations.

53. In the Supplement of an Agenda for Peace, the Secretary-General reviewed most of the issues with which the United Nations was currently dealing. Preventive diplomacy and preventive deployment were means which the Organization would frequently employ in the future. For such activities, information and an effective early-warning and rapid-reaction system were essential. Argentina considered that force should be used in exceptional cases, although in specific situations the Security Council could recommend that Member States take specific measures under strict monitoring, of which the operations in Haiti were an example. With regard to the chapter on post-conflict peace-building, it should be kept in mind that that issue was closely linked with the initiative concerning the activities of the "White Helmets", who to date had carried out their work in a suitable manner in different operations.

54. The need to react more speedily to situations threatening peace could be met by strengthening the standby arrangements. Argentina, together with 24 other countries, was considering the question of establishing a rapidly deployable headquarters team. With regard to the military equipment necessary for deploying United Nations forces, the establishment of reserve logistics bases similar to those in Brindisi and Oslo might make it possible to speed up reaction. Furthermore, at a time when the United Nations was being increasingly subjected to criticism, closer than ever attention should be given to the dissemination of information.

55. Recently, the National Congress had ratified the Convention on the Safety of United Nations and Associated Personnel. Argentina, convinced of the need for the Convention's speedy entry into force, urged all other Member States to ratify it in the near future.

56. His country remained concerned about the fact that many countries had stopped paying their respective contributions for peacekeeping operations. As the representative of Japan had pointed out at the previous meeting, it would be unfortunate if the Organization showed uncertainty about instituting further peacekeeping operations merely because of the current financial crisis. Argentina hoped that that problem would be solved in the near future. Furthermore, his country noted with satisfaction the agreement to enlarge the membership of the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations and considered that the inclusion of new members would play a useful role during the financial crisis and in view of the lack of political support for the Organization.

57. Mr. PARNOHADININGRAT (Indonesia) expressed support for the statement made by the representative of Thailand on behalf of the member States of the Movement

of Non-Aligned Countries and said that a reappraisal of the Organization's peacekeeping operations was necessary in order to adopt more effective and innovative approaches to conflict prevention and resolution. One of the many tasks before the international community was to enhance the understanding of the mandates, time-frames and main political objectives of those operations and promote full implementation of the guiding principles as set forth in the report of the Special Committee (A/51/130).

58. Referring to other aspects of peacekeeping operations, his delegation was pleased to note that the Special Committee had recognized that the developed nations were in a better position to make more generous contributions for peacekeeping than economically less-developed countries. He hoped that the recently established practice of consultations with troop-contributing countries would contribute to ensuring transparency in the decision-making of the Security Council concerning mandates for the deployment and extension of peacekeeping operations and that the institutionalization of those consultative arrangements, leading to even greater efficiency, would be the next step taken. The overall political direction and control should remain with the Security Council and the responsibility for more detailed operational planning and command rested with the Secretary-General. It was equally important that full consideration should be given to the possible participation by all Member States in peacekeeping operations.

59. His delegation in principle supported the standby arrangements and felt that developing countries, in particular, troop-contributors, should be well represented in the composition of a rapidly deployable headquarters team, which would enhance broad international support for its effective functioning. In that connection, Indonesia wholeheartedly supported the decision by the Special Committee to expand its membership.

60. Mr. RIVERO (Cuba) said that his delegation fully supported the statement made at the 15th meeting by Thailand on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries. Although peacekeeping was one of the key instruments available to the United Nations to resolve conflicts and to maintain international peace and security, it was not a preferred method of containing conflicts. Cuba felt that maximum efforts should continue to be made to settle conflicts at an early stage using various methods to facilitate the peaceful settlement of disputes. It was disturbing that in recent years attempts had often been made to erase the line between the provisions of Chapters VI and VII of the Charter of the United Nations, and the use of force on behalf of the United Nations was becoming more widespread. In addition, there was a tendency to confuse the concepts of peacekeeping operations and peacebuilding operations. In that regard his delegation felt that the Special Committee should take up the question of drafting a declaration embodying the relevant principles and submit it for the approval of the General Assembly. The set of principles adopted by the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries at its meeting in Cairo should be taken into account in that context.

61. The report of the Special Committee (A/51/130) contained a number of conclusions and recommendations, the most important of which, in Cuba's opinion, was the recommendation of expanding the membership of the Special Committee. That was the first step, and it was of great importance, although Cuba continued to believe that since all States Members of the United Nations were required to

contribute to activities for the maintenance of international peace and security, the Special Committee should be an open-ended body so that all Members of the Organization could participate in its work. That would contribute to the establishment of an atmosphere of greater transparency and trust when considering the question of peacekeeping operations in all their aspects.

62. On the question of the staffing of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, his delegation noted with concern the inadequate representation of developing countries. That problem had now worsened because of the practice of using seconded personnel. His delegation felt that that practice was inconsistent with the provisions of Article 100 of the Charter of the United Nations, and also with the rules and regulations governing the recruitment of personnel in the Secretariat which had been adopted by the General Assembly. The practice had adverse consequences for the Organization, and the Secretary-General should take steps without delay to correct the situation. One such measure could be the introduction of a moratorium on the recruitment of personnel until a report on the question was submitted and the General Assembly took appropriate steps.

63. With regard to the serious problem of financing, his delegation was deeply concerned that the country which had the largest assessed contribution to the Organization's budget was withholding its payments in pursuit of political and other goals. In that regard it must be pointed out that the contribution of Member States must be paid in full, on time and without any conditions.

64. Another problem in the area of financing was reimbursement of the expenses of countries participating in peacekeeping operations. The arrears of the United Nations to 71 countries in respect of the provision of troops and logistical supplies used in 16 peacekeeping operations amounted to US$ 1.44 billion, approximately US$ 400 million of which was owed to the developing countries. It should be stressed once again that the problem required an urgent solution. As to the question of establishing a rapidly deployable headquarters, it should be recalled that the issue had been considered at a number of meetings of the Special Committee and required further discussion before Member States could take a final decision. In his delegation's view, the functions of the new unit should relate to peacekeeping operations and not other operations, for example, post-conflict peace-building, humanitarian activity or assistance in conducting elections. The financing mechanism should be similar to the mechanism used for peacekeeping operations, and the staff should be recruited on the basis of the concepts of minimum need and the principle of equitable geographical representation.

65. Mr. PELEG (Israel) said that peacekeeping operations had always been a vehicle for preserving peace and preventing armed conflict. Israel had cooperated with United Nations peacekeeping missions in the Middle East since the time of their establishment. In July 1995 a training course had been held in Israel under the auspices of the Israel Defense Forces designed to promote and enhance communication and understanding between the Israel Defence Forces and the various United Nations peacekeeping forces in the region.

66. Israel had acquired a wealth of experience in dealing with humanitarian issues and had begun to share that experience by participating in several peacekeeping missions in Bosnia and Haiti and in Africa. The activity of

various peacekeeping missions in Africa was an indication of the fragile situation throughout that continent. Cooperation between Israel and African countries dated back to the early days of Israel's independence. Africans from many different States had travelled to Israel to receive training and Israeli scientists and engineers travelled throughout the African continent to assist developing nations.

67. In recent years Israel's assistance to African countries had increasingly been provided within the framework of United Nations-sponsored peacekeeping activities. Israeli observers had participated in the elections held in South Africa and Mozambique and in 1994 Israel had been the first country to respond to the request of the United Nations to provide humanitarian assistance to the survivors of the slaughter in Rwanda. In addition, in cooperation with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and other international organizations, Israel had established a field hospital in Goma, Zaire to provide medical assistance to thousands of Rwandan refugees. The countries of the world were once again focusing their attention on the African continent. The international community must do everything possible to prevent a humanitarian disaster in the Great Lakes region. Israel had responded promptly to the Canadian initiative by offering relief assistance to Zaire in the form of medicine and other medical supplies and would continue to contribute to those humanitarian efforts in cooperation with the international community.

68. Ms. ZOELISOA (Madagascar) said that in the early 1990s, after the end of the "cold war", a new era of hope, peace, security, stability and well-being had begun throughout the world, freed from ideological and political clichés. However, hopes for the establishment of a just international order were being overshadowed by mankind's feeling of concern and alarm at the emergence of flashpoints of tension in many different regions. That tension was reflected in such negative phenomena as terrorism, separatism, expansionism, intolerance and xenophobia. In that situation the entire international community must mobilize its efforts to establish a system for the prevention and settlement of conflicts. One of the initiatives in that area was the implementation of "An Agenda for Peace", formulated in 1992 by Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali, Secretary-General of the United Nations.

69. The new United Nations peacekeeping system had already demonstrated its effectiveness in a number of situations, for example in Ethiopia and Somalia in 1993 and in Yugoslavia and Liberia in 1995. Madagascar fully supported that new approach and, acting under the auspices of OAU, had played a role in promoting efforts to settle the conflict in the Comoros in 1995. In addition, her Government had sent 15 judges and legal specialists to Rwanda to work as members of the International Criminal Tribunal and in Rwanda's legal system. It was now necessary to intensify and strengthen the peacekeeping activities of the United Nations through, inter alia: giving the General Assembly access to the mechanisms for the peaceful settlement of conflicts and granting it the necessary powers; strengthening regional structures for the settlement of conflicts from the very outset, acting under the auspices of the United Nations, OAU and the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries; strengthening cooperation between the Security Council and the Economic and Social Council, since one of the causes of conflict was poverty; and strengthening the mediatory role of the United Nations forces.

70. Mr. RI JANG GON (Democratic People's Republic of Korea) said that there were many problems in the modern world as a result of war and violence, confrontation and distrust. Mankind's aspiration to a free and peaceful new world order was facing a great challenge. It was an urgent duty for each Member State and the international community to stop wars and conflicts and establish lasting peace and security. In that connection the United Nations, whose primary objective was the maintenance of international peace and security, had a special role to play. The ultimate purpose of any measures to settle conflicts was to establish peace. Peaceful means were the best option for resolving conflicts. His delegation felt that the imposition of peace by military or violent means was a denial and destruction of peace, and that any peacekeeping activities presupposing the use of force could not be said to be true peace activities.

71. All United Nations peacekeeping activities should be conducted on the basis of the principles of respect for sovereignty, non-interference in internal affairs and impartiality. Although Member States had achieved different levels of development, they all had equal rights to sovereignty and self-determination. If peacekeeping activities violated the sovereignty of States, interfered in their internal affairs or were carried out in the interests of one party to a conflict, they would not win the support of Member States or achieve the expected results. In order to ensure the effectiveness of peacekeeping activities, due attention must be paid to the causes and background of conflicts, the positions of the parties concerned and even possible effects of peacekeeping activities on neighbouring countries and on the region as a whole. It was also important to prevent peacekeeping activities from being used by certain countries for their own political purposes. Cases of misuse of peacekeeping operations by certain powers were still occurring even in the post-cold-war era.

72. It was abnormal that United States troops stationed in South Korea were still using the name and flag of the United Nations. The "United Nations Command" in South Korea was a camouflage created by the United States of America to pursue its objectives without any United Nations resolution. The "United Nations Command" in South Korea meant the United States command, and the "United Nations Forces" were the United States forces. The dissolution of the "United Nations Command" in South Korea was recommended in a resolution of the United Nations, and all the peace-loving forces of the world called for the implementation of that resolution. The United States of America must remove the insignia of the United Nations from the caps of its forces in South Korea. The United Nations, for its part, must take decisive steps to dissolve the "United Nations Command" in South Korea, which was not under its command; that would undoubtedly contribute greatly to the establishment of an atmosphere conducive to ensuring lasting peace in the Korean peninsula.

73. Ms. ZAZA (Zambia) said that as a member of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, her delegation wished to associate itself with the statement made by the representative of Thailand. Peacekeeping operations were of great significance for the maintenance of international peace and security. In recent years, the nature of peacekeeping operations had changed, and they had begun to be carried out on a broader scale. The United Nations must plan those operations carefully and provide them with adequate financial, human and material resources. While supporting peacekeeping operations as a whole, her

delegation felt that the abundant resources spent to carry out some of those operations could be rechannelled to address pressing needs in the areas of education, health and the environment, but that to that end it was necessary to make a genuine commitment to resolving conflicts by peaceful means.

74. Since 1979, Zambia had been a troop-contributing country to peacekeeping operations. Like other such countries, Zambia had lost lives. Her delegation believed that peacekeeping operations should be conducted on the basis of a clear mandate, in observance of the purposes and principles laid down in the Charter of the United Nations, namely, impartiality, consent of the parties to the conflict to the concept of conducting the operation, non-interference in internal affairs, and non-use of force except in self-defence. It also welcomed cooperation with non-governmental organizations since they were better placed to gather information which took into account the cultural characteristics of different countries. Zambia welcomed the decision to establish a rapidly deployable mission headquarters within the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and was confident that its performance would meet the expectations of the international community. It also hoped that equitable representation would be ensured in the staff of the headquarters and commended Norway for pledging to cover the expenses of one person from a developing country for a position in the headquarters.

75. Zambia was also concerned about the issue of reimbursement of the costs of peacekeeping operations. It was important to speed up the process of reimbursement, which would enable Zambia to augment its peacekeeping budget. With regard to the issue of death and disability compensation, her delegation strongly felt that a uniform scale should be established and was happy to note that efforts were already underway to address that problem.

76. Mr. PRICKETT (Australia) said that the report of the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations reflected the important role which United Nations peacekeeping played in the international community's response to threats to international peace and security. Recent developments in many parts of the world had reinforced the need to redouble efforts to strengthen the preventive and peacekeeping capabilities of the United Nations. Her delegation continued to emphasize the importance of enhancing the planning capability of the United Nations for the deployment and management of peacekeeping operations. It supported proposals which allowed the Secretariat to have a greater capacity to conduct feasibility studies of options for the consideration of the Security Council; translate mandates into achievable concepts of operations; provide timely advice and support to the field and meaningful feedback to the Security Council; and develop doctrines and operational concepts, standing operational procedures and related common terminology for United Nations peacekeeping operations.

77. Although the establishment of a rapidly deployable mission headquarters was a constructive step, it would not be a panacea for the range of problems experienced in previous United Nations peacekeeping missions; it would provide operational and planning improvements, however, and would enable the United Nations to deploy more quickly to the field a well-prepared and jointly trained team of military and civilian personnel in the most critical phase of peacekeeping operations. In establishing such a headquarters within the Secretariat, due attention must be given to ensuring transparency of decision-

making related to its structure, the opportunity for all to be informed and consulted in its finalization, and the selection of experienced personnel, with full respect for the principle of equitable geographical representation. His delegation supported the Secretariat's proposal that the headquarters should be made up of a small number of personnel nominated by Member States, existing Secretariat staff and personnel earmarked by their home countries for training and deployment. In addition, the headquarters needed a sound financial basis. Given the current financial situation of the Organization, a viable interim solution would be to establish a trust fund to cover the costs of those Member States which were unable to provide officers on loan. A more appropriate financial basis for the headquarters would be through regular budget funding.

78. As recent events had shown, the role of regional organizations and structures in peacekeeping efforts and preventive action and also the efforts of multinational coalitions must be fully acknowledged. Encouragement should be given to further cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations on mutually reinforcing measures in the field of preventive diplomacy, peacekeeping and peacemaking. One of the important organizations playing a significant role in that respect was the OAU Central Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Resolution and Management, which deserved the support of the international community. His delegation also supported the Secretary-General's practical proposals to improve preparedness for conflict prevention and peacekeeping in Africa, including the use of standby arrangements. However, regional organizations or multinational coalitions could not be a substitute for the United Nations, which should continue to play a leading role in the maintenance of international peace and security, even at a time of financial difficulties.

79. His delegation was pleased that pragmatic solutions had been found in providing adequate staff for the Department of Peacekeeping Operations in the absence of adequate and regular funding. His delegation believed that while in principle staff should be provided and funded through the regular budget, if that was not possible during the financial crisis, the provision of staff at no cost was a useful alternative. Nevertheless, the continuing financial crisis, caused solely by the recalcitrance of the largest contributor to the United Nations budget about paying its arrears, was imposing an increasingly heavy and unfair burden on those Member States which met their obligations by paying their assessed contributions in full, on time and without conditions and also on troop-contributing countries, some of which were least able to afford such a burden. Quite apart from the very large and unfair financial burden imposed, the political affairs within the United Nations system were highly destructive. Australia welcomed the upcoming expansion of the membership of the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations and hoped that it would reinvigorate the Special Committee's work and contribute to a strengthening of trust and cooperation in the peacekeeping arena.

80. Ms. DARMANIN (Malta) said that her delegation wished to associate itself with the views expressed in the statement by the representative of Ireland.

81. The CHAIRMAN suggested that the general debate on item 86 should be concluded and that decisions should be taken on the draft resolutions on the item at the Committee's next meeting, on 20 November 1996 at 3 p.m.

82. It was so decided.

The meeting rose at 1.15 p.m.